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MARRIAGE.

COLL. CHRISTI REGIS S.J.
BIB. MAJOR
TORONTO

MARRIAGE.

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"Quod Deus conjunxit, homo non separet."

"What God has joined together, let no man put asunder."—*Matt.* xix. 6.

BY

THE REV. CHAS. W. WOOD,

ST. MARY'S, SWINTON, MANCHESTER.

FIRST EDITION.

Copies may be had direct from the Author.

FORT WILLIAM, MISSION.
R. R. P. P. JÉSUITES.
ONT., CANADA.

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1887.

COLL. CHRISTI REGIS S.J.
BIB. MAJOR
TORONTO

To

MY BISHOP,

The Right Reverend

HERBERT,

BISHOP OF SALFORD,

A Model of Zeal for the Clergy and Laity

of his Diocese,

This little volume on Marriage

is respectfully inscribed.

C. W. W.

FORT-WILLIAM, MISSION.
R. R. P. P. JÉSUITES.
ONT., CANADA.

Perlegi opus de Matrimonio R. D. Wood, Rectoris Ecclesiæ Sanctæ Mariæ apud Swinton. Quominus publici juris fiat,

NIHIL OBSTAT,

Jacobus Jones, S.J.,

Censor, Deput.

24th March, 1887.

IMPRIMATUR,

✠ HERBERT, Bishop of Salford.

April, 1887.

TO THE DEAN AND PRESIDENT OF THE SALFORD CONFERENCE OF CLERGY.

Swinton,
April, 1887.

Dear Monsignor,

The present volume is a development of the Essay on the Sanctity of Christian Marriage, which was read at the Monthly Conference of Clergy, held at the Bishop's Seminary, in November last, at which you presided.

The kind approval manifested by the members on that occasion, which you were good enough to endorse, as well as the general wish then expressed that the Essay should be printed for their use, led to its revision and preparation for the press.

The time has come when the request of the Conference is about to be carried out. There would seem, therefore, to be a fitness in associating its publication with those to whose kind encouragement it may be supposed to be due.

This Conference case was understood to be the outcome of the Bishop's anxiety to check and remedy pressing evils in his Diocese arising from the prevalence of mixed and irreligious Marriages.

The present volume, therefore, aims at being practical and suggestive, and necessarily omits much that a treatise upon Marriage might be expected to contain.

It has but little pretension to originality. It is for the most part a compilation—and in some cases a mere transcription.

Still it is trusted that it may be found to be an useful compendium for both Clergy and Laity on the subject of Christian Marriage.

My grateful acknowledgments are due to the Rev. Fr. Jones, S.J., the able Professor of Moral Theology, St. Beuno's College, for the kind perusal of the work, and for valuable suggestions made throughout.

I remain,
Dear Monsignor,
Yours faithfully,
CHAS. W. WOOD.

To the Right Rev.
Monsignor Canon Kershaw,
All Saints',
Barton.

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PART I.

ESSAY

ON THE

SANCTITY OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

CHAPTER I.

MATRIMONY AS A NATURAL CONTRACT DIVINELY INSTITUTED IN THE OLD LAW.

Verbal Definition and Meaning—Definition of Sacramental Contract—Conditions of Validity—Divine Institution of Natural Contract proved from the Old Testament and the New Testament—Referred to in the Encyclical of Leo XIII.—The Ends—Indissolubility of Marriage as a mere Natural Contract, indicated and proved from Scripture.

Verbal Derivation and Meaning of Matrimony.

THE word matrimony*, as is well known, is derived from two Latin words, signifying the office of mother, matris, munus, and is so called because the woman is married, in order to become a mother; to bear and bring up children is the office of a mother.

Definition.

The Catechism defines matrimony to be a sacrament, by which the contract of marriage is blessed and sanctified.

It is declared to be a contract and also a sacrament. As a sacrament it was instituted by our Lord when He was on earth, but as a contract or state of life it dates from the beginning of the world.

* Christian Doctrine. Published by Messrs. Burns & Oates. Chap. CXXIII., Pages 373-380, passim.

As, then, the sacrament is founded on the contract, and cannot be separated from it, it may be well to consider matrimony as a contract before treating it as a sacrament of the new law.

Definition as a mere natural contract.

Marriage as a "mere contract" is defined to be "a lawful union of a man and woman by which they give themselves up, one to the other, for mutual society, and begetting of children."

As men bind themselves to one another by contracts of different sorts, and with different objects in view, so the essential part of matrimony as a contract is "the man and woman binding themselves to one another."

Conditions of Validity.

But in order to this being valid four conditions are required:—

(1.) It is necessary that the contract should be between persons who are not lawfully hindered from making it.

(2.) That it should be voluntary, or else it is not really the persons binding themselves.

(3.) That the contract be expressed by words or outward signs.

(4.) And this to signify not that the contracting parties intend to promise or bind themselves hereafter to each other, but that they actually do so there and then, and with the intention of living as man and wife.

Marriage as a natural contract divinely instituted.

Marriage as a natural contract was instituted by God Himself.

Proof, *Gen.* i. 27.

We read in the first chapter of Genesis that "God created man in His own image, male and female created he them; and God blessed them and said, Increase and multiply and fill the earth." (*Gen.* i. 27.)

First end of Marriage.

This was the primary end of this union between man and woman in marriage.

Further on, in the same book of Genesis, we have shown to us the second end of marriage, in the description of the creation of Eve.

Gen. ii. Second end of marriage.

And the Lord said, "It is not good for man to be alone; let us make a help like unto himself."

And again: "For Adam there was not found a helper like himself."

"Then the Lord cast a deep sleep on Adam, and when he was asleep he took one of his ribs, and filled up the flesh for it, and the Lord God built the rib, which he took from Adam, into a woman, and brought her to Adam; and Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.

Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh." (*Gen.* ii. and seq.)

Thus we see that matrimony as a *mere natural contract* was of divine appointment, and our divine Lord in the nineteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel refers

to the words of Genesis just quoted in proof of this divine appointment.

This divine institution referred to in the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII.

Pope Leo XIII. in one of his Encyclical letters, writing with the view of urging the sanctity of marriage, uses words which may be here appositely quoted*: "Since matrimony has God for its author, and was from the beginning a certain foreshadowing of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God, it has ever been invested from the very beginning with a sacred and religious character, which cannot be regarded as accidental, but rather as something intrinsically belonging to it, and not as received from man but as imprinted by nature." (Pope Leo XIII. in Encyl. "Arcanum Divinæ Sapientiæ." 10th February, 1880.)

Third end of Marriage.

After the fall, when the flesh was now no longer obedient to the spirit, there was a third subsidiary end of marriage, that through it man might more easily avoid offending God by sins of impurity. And so St. Paul, in speaking of those who do not possess the gift of continence, says: "To avoid fornication let every man have his own wife and let every woman have her own husband." (1 *Cor.* vii. 2.)

Three ends of Matrimony.

These, then, were the three ends of matrimony as instituted by God:—

(1.) The pro-creation of children.

(2.) Mutual love, society, and friendship.

(3.) A remedy for concupiscence.

*Encycl. Arcanum Div. Sapæ. Feb. 10, 1880.

The bond of marriage as a mere natural contract indissoluble by divine institution.

Moreover, matrimony as a mere natural contract or bond of union was a perpetual and indissoluble union.

This is gathered, as the Council of Trent teaches, from the passages of Genesis already cited.

It is true that in the Book of Deuteronomy directions are given in reference to divorcing a wife, but when the disciples of our Lord referred to this permission to solve the matrimonial union, our Lord answered them, that "Moses by reason of the hardness of your hearts permitted you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." (*Matt.* xix. 8).

Such being the contract of marriage as instituted by God in the beginning, and as it obtained in the old dispensation, invested with a sacred and religious character, and as "the true foreshadowing of the mystery of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ," it remains now to see and understand how that *natural contract*, with its sacred and religious character, has become *elevated* and *ennobled* in the Christian dispensation.

CHAPTER II.

MATRIMONY AS A SACRAMENTAL CONTRACT DIVINELY INSTITUTED IN THE NEW LAW.

Time of Institution discussed by the Fathers—Ecclesiastical Tradition as to the Divine Institution—Proof from Scripture—St. Paul's Words—Indissoluble Union—Matter and Form—Ministers of the Sacrament—Nature of the Sacramental Union—Sacramental Graces—Nuptial Blessing—Sacramentum in Fieri—Sacramentum in Facto—Married State a Holy State.

Divine institution of marriage as a sacramental contract.

In the new law, our blessed Lord, as the Council of Trent teaches, instituted seven sacraments as means of grace. One of them was matrimony.*

Matrimony is a true and proper sacrament, says the same Council.

Matrimony as a sacrament is defined to be "a sacrament of the new law by which the contract of marriage is blessed and sanctified."

Time of institution.

It is not known when our Lord actually instituted this particular sacrament.

Opinion of the Fathers.

Many of the fathers thought that, as He sanctified water for washing away sins, by being Himself baptized in the Jordan, so He sanctified marriage, and raised it to the dignity of a

* Appendix.

sacrament, by Himself assisting at the marriage at Cana, when He worked His first miracle; while others refer to the words of our Lord when, in speaking of marriage and its institution by God in paradise, He said: "What, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." (*Matt.* xix. 6).

And others again think that it was formally ordained by our Lord with other sacraments after His resurrection, when He spoke to His disciples of the kingdom of God. (*Acts* i. 3).

Ecclesiastical tradition as to the divine institution of the sacramental contract.

Although the exact time of its institution may not be known, it is nevertheless an undoubted *tradition* that the natural contract of marriage was ennobled and raised to the dignity of a sacrament, and was constituted a sacramental union, perpetual and indissoluble, having annexed to it divine blessings and graces, which at once transferred marriage from the mere natural to the spiritual and supernatural order of things.

Scriptural proof, St. Paul. *Ephes.* v. 28.

The Roman catechism refers to this undoubted tradition of the church, and to the words of St. Paul as proving this divine institution in his epistle to the *Ephesians*, v. 28.

"So ought also men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself; for no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ did the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father

and mother, and shall adhere to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and the church."

Indissoluble union of Christian marriage.

The introduction of the figure of the union of Christ with His church as an image of the physical and spiritual union of the parties receiving the sacrament of Christian marriage, indicates the sacred and holy character of the sacramental contract; and, at the same time, points to that perpetual nuptial union effected in the sacrament of Christian marriage which cannot be dissolved but by death.

Matter and form.

The matter and form of the sacrament is, then, the natural contract, and the consent of the parties expressed in words.*

Ministers of the sacrament.

The ministers of the sacrament are the parties themselves.* And if the necessary conditions be fulfilled, a great and mysterious and perpetual union is effected, great and sacramental graces are bestowed, and great and serious duties and obligations are incurred.

Matrimony, therefore, in the new law has been lifted out of the natural order, and has been placed in a higher sphere.

It is constituted a sacramental union. The natural contract ever remains as before—the basis, or the matter and form, of the sacrament; but that natural contract has now been sanctified. A sacramental seal

* Appendix.

has been placed upon it; and by it the matrimonial union is made once more, "as in the beginning," perpetual and irrevocably indissoluble.

Sacramental graces and blessings.

Graces and blessings and spiritual aids are annexed to its worthy administration and reception. Corresponding higher duties and responsibilities are incurred, and a greater happiness here and hereafter is secured.

Matrimonium in fieri of theologians.

Not only is the administration of the sacrament, or "matrimonium in fieri" as it is called, a holy, solemn, and religious act, but there

Matrimonium in facto of theologians.

remains upon the nuptial union created at the altar the sacramental seal or character which continues with the "married parties," accompanies them as they leave the altar for their home, permeates their newly consecrated state, remains with them through life, lasts until death, and constitutes the "matrimonium in facto" of theologians.*

Recipients, the ministers.

The parties to the contract have then been the *ministers* of this sacrament as well as the *recipients* of its graces and blessings.

Sacramental union compared with the union of Christ and His church.

Their union is not only perpetual, but inviolable and indissoluble, and is of such an intimate character that St. Paul has not hesitated to illustrate it, as we have already seen, by comparing it to the mysterious and perpetual union of Christ with His church. (*Eph.* v. 28.)

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* Appendix.

The nuptial union in Christian marriage is therefore a solemn and sacred sacramental union, and is of necessity for life. The contracting parties take each other for better or for worse, for richer for poorer, and promise fidelity and mutual love under all circumstances "until death do them part." (*Rom.* vii. 2.)

Married state a continued holy state.

Thus it cannot be too often repeated, that the sacramental character of Christian marriage makes the "nuptial union" a continued "holy union," and makes the state of the married parties a continued, holy and sanctified state.

CHAPTER III.

ENDS, DUTIES, AND OBLIGATIONS OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

Its Elevated Character—Indicated in the words of the Nuptial Blessing—Explanation and Enumeration of Duties and Obligations given in the English Ritual in the words of St. Paul—The conditions of a worthy preparation quoted from the Ritual — Proved from Scripture, viz., Purity of Conscience, Purity of Intention—The high and exalted character of Christian Marriage based on Christian principles and motives—Not the impulse of passion—Children to be regarded as sacred pledges.

Ends, duties, and obligations of Christian sacramental marriage.

THE ends, duties, and obligations of Christian marriage may, indeed, be for the most part the same as those which previously belonged to the natural contract, but they have a higher and nobler character, because based on higher and nobler principles; for which are granted special sacramental graces and blessings, in order to their more easy and more meritorious fulfilment.

Indicated in the words of the nuptial blessing.

These ends, duties, and obligations of matrimony for which these special graces are given, and which are indicated in the words of the nuptial blessing invoked upon the woman in the marriage ceremony, are even still more clearly expressed and explained in the exhortation found in our English Ritual, and which is

Further explanation in the English Ritual.

appointed to be read to those who present themselves for matrimony.

The ends. The ends of Christian marriage as there enumerated are as follows:—

Enumerated. To enable them to love one another according to God; to restrain concupiscence; to bear with each others weaknesses; mutually to help each other; to walk hand in hand to heaven; and to bring up their children, if they should be blessed with any, in the fear and love of God.

Scriptural proof, *St. Paul*, of duties and obligations. We are led into the knowledge of the reciprocal duties and mutual obligations which belong to the married state by the words of St. Paul in his *Epistle to the Ephesians*, c. v., v. 22.

Duties of wives to their husbands. "Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife; as Christ is the head of the church, he is the saviour of His body. Therefore, as the church is subject to Christ, so also let wives be to their husbands in all things.

Duties of husbands to their wives. Husbands, love your wives as Christ also loved the church, and delivered Himself up for it, that he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life; that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. So also men ought to love their wives as their own bodies. "He that loveth his wife loveth himself; for no man

hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the church. Because we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in His church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular love his wife as himself, and let the wife fear her husband."

These words will be found confirmed by St. Peter in his first epistle, c. iii.

"Let wives be subject to their husbands, that if any believe not the word they may be gained without the word, by the conversation of their wives, considering your chaste conversation with fear, whose adorning let it not be the outward plaiting of the hair, or the wearing of gold, or the putting on of apparel; but the hidden man of the heart in the incorruptibility of a quiet and meek spirit, which is rich in the sight of God.

Examples of good wives from the Old Testament.

For after this manner heretofore also the holy women, hoping in God, adorned themselves, being subject to their own husbands; as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are. . . .

Special exhortation to husbands.

Ye husbands likewise dwelling with them according to knowledge, giving honour to the female as to the weaker vessel, and as to the co-heirs of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered."

Further duties. *St. Paul, 1 Cor.* vii.

Further duties are pointed out and further special counsel is given by St. Paul in his *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, c. vii. :—

"Now, concerning the things whereof you wrote to me. It is good for a man not to touch a woman; but for fear of fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render the debt to his wife, and the wife also in like manner to the husband. The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband. And in like manner the husband also hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud not one another, except perhaps by consent, for a time, that you may give yourselves to prayer; and return together again, lest Satan tempt you for your incontinence. But I speak this by indulgence, not by commandment. For I would that all men were even as myself: but every one hath his proper gift from God: one after this manner and another after that. But I say to the unmarried and to the widows, it is good for them if they so continue even as I. But if they do not contain themselves, let them marry. For it is better for them to marry than to be burnt. But to them that are married, not I, but the Lord, commandeth that the wife depart not from her husband, and let not the husband put away his wife. A woman is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband die, she is at liberty: let her marry to whom she will, only in the Lord. But more blessed shall

she be, if she so remain, according to my counsel, and I think that I also have the spirit of God, which is also enjoined by the church."

Words of Ritual as to preparation—purity of conscience.

"Your first care," says the exhortation at the end of the Ritual, "should be to come to this sacrament with a *conscience purified by repentance* from all wilful sin, *i.e.*, by a devout and sincere confession, lest otherwise you incur the guilt of a

Danger of profanation of sacrament.

sacrilegious profanation of this divine institution, and instead of a blessing receive here your condemnation, with evident danger of entailing upon yourselves a long train of miseries in this life and eternal miseries in the next.

Words of Ritual as to purity of intention.

Your intention should also be pure; that is, you ought to embrace this holy state with a view to promote the glory of God and the salvation of your souls, and to answer the holy ends for which God ordained it, lest if you should in such manner receive matrimony as to shut out God from

Scriptural proof.

yourselves, and from your mind, you should, as the Scripture says, fall under the power of the devil. (*Tob.* vi. 17.)

Words of Ritual as to modesty of conduct.

Further, as you are to come to receive this holy sacrament of Christian marriage with purity of intention, you must take care not to admit of anything in the celebration of your marriage which may be either inconsistent with your religion, or contrary to that modesty, decency, and sanctity

which become Christians at all times, and more especially on so sacred and so solemn an occasion."

Exalted idea of Christian marriage as taught by the church.

Thus is a high and exalted idea of Christian marriage placed before the children of the church. Plain and intelligible are the high motives and principles

Christian principles and motives.

which are to actuate and influence the conduct of all Catholics when preparing for the reception of this holy sacrament.

Not the impulse of blind passion.

Not (in the words of Scripture) like the horse and the mule, that have no understanding, will devout and well-instructed Christians seek to consummate a matrimonial union, but guided by the church of God, and acting on the great religious principles of its teaching, they will purify their conscience, sanctify their motives and intentions, and seek from the sacramental union all the necessary graces, blessings, and spiritual aids which are promised to the worthy recipients, for the fulfilment of their onerous duties and responsibilities.

Children to be regarded as sacred pledges.

Above all, Christians are taught that the children, which may be the fruit of their nuptial union, are not to be regarded as mere additions to the family or state, nor as mere instruments of profit, but as a solemn pledge of love from Almighty God, a sacred charge, and a delicate trust; that they are immortal souls to be Christianised, trained and educated for the honour, love, and service of God, and for the possession of eternal happiness in heaven hereafter.

CHAPTER IV.

INESTIMABLE BENEFITS ARISING FROM POPULAR INSTRUCTION, AND FROM A WIDESPREAD KNOWLEDGE OF THE CHURCH'S TEACHING ON THIS SACRED SUBJECT.

Instruction and knowledge will insure a worthy preparation and reception of the Sacrament—Will prevent civil, mixed, irreligious, and mere worldly marriages (Allocution of Pope Leo XIII.)—Will sanctify the married as well as the unmarried—Will cause parents to bring up their children with a love of morality—Will ensure the observance of modesty in the intercourse of adults—Will lead children to consult parents and spiritual advisers as to the selection of partners, and as to company keeping—Will ensure recourse to prayer and the sacraments for light and grace.

The inestimable benefits of popular instruction on this sacred subject.

Now, the more generally and the more vividly the sacramental character of Christian marriage is recognised and appreciated by the faithful, and the more widely spread and more intelligently understood is the character of the sacred duties and obligations of that state, the more likely will persons contemplating matrimony be inclined to prepare worthily; to seek and accept the spiritual guidance of their pastors, and to prize and esteem the religious and spiritual aspect of Christian marriage

Will ensure a worthy preparation.

above and beyond the mere carnal and worldly motives which may be urged upon them. The more enlightened also will be the *intellectus et consensus fidelium* (the understanding and conviction of the faithful), as to the exclusive power, authority, and direction of the church in all that appertains to Christian marriage; the more pronounced and decided will be public opinion as to the just condemnation of the usurpation of ecclesiastical jurisdiction and authority by the civil power in the creation of civil marriages; the more intense will be the horror, disgust, and repugnance, individually and collectively, at any proposal which may be made for Catholics to go through the form of Christian marriage before the registrar or in the Protestant church; the more difficult and the more disapproved will become the practice of Catholics contracting marriage with non-Catholics;* and the more will the following words of our holy and revered sovereign Pontiff, in one of his recent Encyclicals already quoted, be appreciated and be practically and obediently accepted as a first principle of conduct (Allocution, Leo XIII.):—

Will prevent civil marriages.

Will diminish the number of mixed marriages.

"Since then, marriage is by its own nature and constitution clothed in a sacred character, it is only proper and reasonable that holy marriage should not be regarded as a matter for the legislation and direction

* See valuable Pastoral Instruction and Letter of the Bishop of Birmingham.

of the secular power, but rather the legitimate object of the care and authority of the church, to whose direction and guidance was committed the custody of all sacred things. When, however, it is remembered that Christian marriage has been elevated and ennobled by the divine institution and accession of a sacramental character and sacramental grace, we at once perceive the high position and rank which Christian marriage enjoys in comparison with the former mere natural contract. At the same time it becomes apparent that as the sacraments have been placed by Christ under the exclusive care and direction of the church, it would be altogether impossible for the church to sanction any withdrawal of the management and direction of sacramental marriage from her own ecclesiastical jurisdiction."

The knowledge of the church's teaching will tend to sanctify the lives of married and unmarried.

From these words of our holy father and from all that has been stated it becomes at once obvious that the influence of the church's teaching on the subject of the sanctity of Christian marriage, wherever recognised and accepted, must produce untold and multiplied good results in the lives of the faithful, both married and unmarried.

Will cause modest children

It will be seen in the modesty of the children who have been brought up by religious and holy parents.

Will ensure modesty in the intercourse of adults.

It will be seen in the necessary precautions which will be taken to prevent

the young from being exposed to the dangerous occasions of sin, both as to company keeping, and as to places of amusement and resort, as well as in their deportment and intercourse with each other.

Will lead children to consult with parents and spiritual advisers as to company keeping.

The first intimation of the formation of an acquaintance with a view to marriage will be submitted by children properly trained to their parents for approval, to the priest for guidance, and to God for light and grace, for direction and protection.

Will ensure recourse to prayers and sacraments for light and grace.

Prayer and the frequentation of the sacraments will be the source of help to which they will undoubtedly have recourse.

CHAPTER V.

PAST BENEFICIAL EFFECTS PRODUCED IN EUROPE BY THE CHURCH'S DOCTRINE AND TEACHING AS TO THE SANCTITY OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

Contrast between the married state before and after the Christian Era—Transformation of society by the church's doctrine on Christian marriage—Historic picture of married state in the pagan world—The former degraded position of woman—The present honourable position due to the Catholic church's doctrine as to equality and identity of origin, and especially as to the unity and indissolubility of Christian marriage—Struggle of human nature to evade and elude the laws of the church—Exclusive power of religion to guarantee the inviolability of the marriage tie—The usurpation of the church's rights by the civil power lowering the standard of the married state.

Past beneficial effects of the teaching of the church in reference to Christian marriage.

THUS far we have considered the sanctity of marriage in its origin and divine institution; in its elevation, sacramental character, spiritual aids, and beneficial effects, when worthily approached and received.

Our consideration has been wholly based on Scripture, and upon the theoretical and practical teaching of the church as founded upon holy Scripture.

Now, if it would not be deemed irrelevant, it might be worth while to glance at the character and effects of "marriage" as recognised, and as it obtained in the

Before the time and at the coming of our Lord.

world, before the time and at the coming of our Lord, and before the institution of the church. The description of the transformation which took place in Europe through the action of the church in the inculcation of the sanctity of Christian marriage, in its sacramental unity and indissolubility, cannot but afford an argument not only for the truth and power and beneficial effects of the sacrament of Christian marriage, but also a practical demonstration of the false doctrines which have for 300 years been before the world upon the vital subject of Christian marriage.

If, then, we now for a moment pass from the consideration of the church's doctrines and teaching upon the great subject of Christian marriage, to the consideration of the effects of that teaching upon the people of the West, we shall find that a marvellous change and transformation of society resulted from her teaching and action in the formation of Christendom. The principal features of this wonderful change appeared in the constitution of the Christian family, and in the renovation and purification of social life.

Transformation of Society.

Review of history as to the contrast between marriage as a natural and as a sacramental contract.

History records the great contrast presented between the time when marriage was a mere natural and civil contract, and the subsequent period of the Christian era, when marriage was recognised as a sacrament, and no longer as under the jurisdiction of a civil tribunal.

History clearly proves that the conception of Christian marriage as promulgated by the church was regarded by men as a new and exalted idea, and as a startling revelation of the divine will.

Continued opposition to the church's teaching.

Long was the opposition to her teaching; intense was the repugnance to accept her firm and unwavering doctrines; fierce and strong were the efforts made to defy and evade her laws.

Conversion of the pagan world a work of difficulty.

The conversion and regeneration of the pagan world and the formation of Christendom was a work of gigantic difficulty. It was achieved, *Deo adjuvante*, by patience and firmness, joined with apostolic severity of discipline, and tempered with prudence, charity, and zeal.

Historic picture of married state in pagan world.

But to understand the nature of this great work accomplished by the church, and especially by her doctrine and discipline as to the sanctity, unity, and indissolubility of Christian marriage, we have only to recall the picture of the married state as it existed before the Christian era. At that period we find society distinguished especially by the unfortunate degradation of woman, and the consequent unsettled condition of family and social life.

Former estimate and position of woman.

The estimate of woman as found pourtrayed in the history of Grecian and Roman literature is well known. Woman had been dethroned, and had come to be regarded as the mere instrument and victim of man's pleasure and caprice.

There was neither equality of rank, nor stability of position, nor rights sacred and inviolable, nor pledge of immunity from sudden and unjust banishment from home and children.

Her present honourable position and dignity due to the church.

To the church and especially to the church's teaching as to the sanctity of Christian marriage, woman owes her restoration to her rightful position in the Christian family and in the social life which she now enjoys.

Woman's restoration to her proper dignity was the result of the church's action in the reformation of marriage.*

Proof, church taught that woman was man's equal in origin and destiny.

The great doctrines of the faith were shown to apply equally to woman as to man, and thus they became a protest against the state of degradation to which the woman had been reduced.

The Christian doctrine as to humanity made the existing prejudices against woman vanish for ever.

Her unity of origin.

It made her equal to man by unity of origin and destiny. In the participation of heavenly gifts, it enrolled her in the universal brotherhood of man, with his fellows, and Jesus Christ. It considered her as the child of God, the co-heiress of

Her position as the companion of man.

Jesus Christ, as the companion of man, and no longer as his slave and the vile instrument of his pleasure.

* See the admirable Essay on Christian Marriage by Fr. Humphrey, S.J.

This was the first step in the work of the restoration and elevation of woman. In spite, however, of the beneficial influence of the church's teaching, the desired end would not have been attained had not the church undertaken, with unflinching energy, the reformation of marriage.

Woman's altered position due to Christian teaching as to unity and indissolubility of marriage.

"One with one, exclusively and for ever," became the cardinal principle which she advocated, and from which she has never receded.

Struggle of human nature to evade the church's laws.

How fierce must have been the struggle of the church in so successfully triumphing over the wicked traditions and strong passions of men will be understood by recalling the successive phases and epochs of history during the first ages of the church.

Balmez's description of European manners.

"The imagination is affrighted," says Balmez, the great philosophical and polemical writer, "at the thought of what would have happened if those barbarous kings, in whom the splendour of the purple but ill-disguised the sons of the forest, if those haughty lords, fortified in their castles, clothed in mail, and surrounded by their timid vassals, had not found a check in the authority of the church. If at the first glance of a new beauty, if at the first passion, which, when enkindled in their hearts, would have inspired them with a disgust for their legitimate spouses, they had not had the recollection always present of an inflexible authority."

If we read but the history of the middle ages, and review that immense scene of violence, we shall see the barbarian, as he strives to break the bonds which civilisation attempted to impose upon him, depicted in dark and terrible characters. If, morover, we recollect that the church was obliged to keep guard incessantly and vigilantly, not only to prevent the ties of marriage from being broken, but even to preserve virgins from violence, we shall clearly see that, unless the church had opposed herself like a wall of brass to the torrent of sensuality, by her teaching as to the sanctity of Christian marriage, the palaces of kings and the castles of barons would have speedily become their seraglios and their harems. Other classes also of society would have followed the same course, and the women of Europe would have remained in the state of degradation in which Mussulman women still are.

Effects of the church's teaching as to the indissolubility of marriage tie.

A further all-important beneficial influence exerted by the teaching of the church as to the sanctity of Christian marriage, appeared in the doctrine of the indissolubility of the marriage tie.

The teaching of the church on this subject has proved that the most efficacious means of preventing corruption of manners, guaranteeing the tranquility of families, and of opposing a firm barrier to the torrents of evils ready to inundate society, is to establish the indissolubility of marriage as a moral and religious principle; to base it upon motives which exercise a

powerful influence over the heart, and which keep a constant restraint on the passions, and thus prevent them slipping down so dangerous a declivity—*Facilis descensus Averni.*

Power of religion to protect marriage.

To consider marriage not as a simple civil contract, but as a real sacrament, was to place it under the august shade of religion, and to raise it above the stormy atmosphere of passions. Now, remove the all-powerful influence of religion, and then, where will be found the motives and power able to check and control the passions of men?

Civil laws unable to guarantee indissolubilty.

The civil laws are utterly unable to produce such an effect. Far higher must be the motives and sanctions than those which civil laws supply, if they are to exert an efficacious influence.

Usurpation by the civil power no triumph.

Although it be true that the Protestant doctrine overturned the power of the church with respect to marriage, and gave up matters of this kind exclusively to the civil power, yet this must never be regarded as any real triumph, nor as a victory for congratulation.

Proof from philosophy and experience.

Philosophy and experience, apart from the teaching of the church, prove that the best means of directing the passions of men is to place marriage under the mantle of religion, and that to withdraw it as much as possible from profane interference is to surround it with enchanting beauty.

Thus is that precious treasure which is blasted by a look, and tarnished by the slightest breath, inviolably preserved.

The nuptial bed should be veiled, and strictly guarded by religion.

Results of the church's teaching on Christendom.

The teaching of the church, therefore, in reference to Christian marriage has been productive of most holy and most beneficial results."

Woman's present position in the Christian family.

Not only was a revealed truth taught and accepted, not only was a sacrament recognised and revered, with all its necessary conditions of worthy preparation, and its indissoluble nuptial union, but woman was reinstated in her proper and natural position. She obtained her legitimate rank and privilege, and was placed again in her rightful sphere, for the exercise of her beneficent influence in the family and in social life, which has deservedly won for her that respect, reverence, and love which were always her undoubted privilege.

Blessed effects of the restoration of woman to her normal rank and privilege.

This wonderful result of the teaching of the church on the subject of the sanctity of Christian marriage was naturally accompanied with all the blessings of peace, harmony, and stability which marked the family, social and civil life of Christian nations, until 300 years ago, when a new departure was made, by a great revolt against the teaching of the church.

Effects of usurpation of civil power.

The sacred and sacramental character of Christian marriage was then boldly and impiously impugned. The civil power presumed to declare marriage to be nothing more than a mere natural contract. It withdrew its administration and management from the jurisdiction of the church. It

Standard of married life lowered.

successfully lowered the standard and ideal of marriage down to the natural order, and claimed henceforth the exclusive right to celebrate marriage as a mere civil ceremony. The State even arrogated the discretionary power of dissolving the nuptial union.

CHAPTER VI.

DIVORCE.*

Divorce as a mere separation—Divorce as separation, with legal right to remarry—Divorce not permitted in the Catholic Church—Contract of Matrimony—Sacramental in the case of all baptized persons—The Contract always Sacramental if valid—Divorce impossible — Legalised adulteries — Two exceptional cases — Woman's indebtedness to the Church—The Roman Pontiffs, the champions of Woman's Rights.

Divorce impossible.

"FROM what has been already stated as to the Church's teaching upon the subject of the indissolubility of the sacramental contract, it follows that the Church cannot countenance or sanction what is termed Divorce in this country, that is, the dissolution of the matrimonial bond by the annulling of the matrimonial contract.

Divorce as mere separation of married parties.

Divorce, in the sense of the separation of married persons *(quoad mensam et thorum)*, is indeed permitted on sufficient grounds by the Catholic Church.

Divorce as a judicial separation with legal right to remarry not permitted by the Catholic Church

Divorce, however, as understood in this country, implying a judicial separation of married parties after cohabitation, with permission for either to marry again during the lifetime of the other, not only is not

* By kind permission of the Rev. Fr. Humphrey, S.J. From his Essay on "Christian Marriage."—Keegan, Paul & Co., London.

permitted in the Catholic Church, but is absolutely and unconditionally forbidden, both by divine and ecclesiastical law.

It has been already stated that Christian marriage is sacramental and indissoluble. That the sacramental contract once made cannot be dissolved or be broken until death. There cannot be any true matrimonial contract between baptized persons which is not, of necessity, at the same time a sacrament.

The contract of matrimony sacramental in the case of all baptized persons

Whenever in any union of baptized persons there is no sacrament, it is simply and solely because the contract between such persons was invalid, and was, therefore, not a true matrimonial contract. In every case in which the contract between Christians is matrimonially valid, it is also sacramental. The sacramental nature of the contract does not depend on the faith of the contracting parties; on their belief in sacraments; or, on their being aware that matrimony is a sacrament; or, that their matrimonial contract is sacramental.

The contract sacramental if valid.

The sacramentality of the contract depends solely on two facts—the fact of the validity of the contract, and the fact that it is entered into by persons who had previously been baptized. The sacramentality is entirely independent of their intention, and the only intention which is necessary on their part is that of entering into a valid matrimonial contract. It follows,

therefore, that the marriages of Protestants, supposing them to have been validly baptized, are as sacramental as are the marriages of Catholics. Their matrimony is as much sacramental as their baptism. It is as independent of their belief or unbelief, of their knowledge or ignorance of its sacramental nature."

The matrimonial contract then, being sacramental and indissoluble, it follows that what is meant by "Divorce," that is, a legal judicial separation *(quoad vinculum)*, of married parties who have cohabited together, with permission for each to marry again, is not only prohibited by divine and ecclesiastical law, but, moreover, the Divorce itself, or rupture of the matrimonial contract, on the part of the civil power, is absolutely impossible. So that no mere human power on earth can sever, or permit to be severed, that nuptial bond. They, therefore, who permit themselves to take advantage of the opportunities of release from matrimonial difficulties offered by the legal enactments of the civil power, do not, in reality, obtain a release from the contract or bond of marriage before God and the Church.

Divorce impossible.

Wives and husbands may separate and enter, with other men and women, into unhallowed unions; but such unions can never be Christian marriages.

Legalised adulteries.

Legalised adulteries is the mildest term by which Christian men can, with truth, describe them. Marriage on such terms, and marriages

made in contemplation of possible Divorce, becomes, at best, a licensed concubinage."

Exceptional cases.

It may be here stated that this bond is of a twofold character, religious or sacramental and also natural. The Church regards the religious and natural bond as broken by divine dispensation whenever, before the consummation of the marriage (*Matrimonum ratum et consummatum*), one of the married parties enters religion and makes a solemn vow of chastity.

For other grave reasons also the Church regards a dispensation permissible in case of a merely ratified but not consummated marriage.

The Church considers the natural bond or contract dissoluble by divine institution when in the case of two married unbelievers (unbaptized) one embraces the Christian faith, and the other will not continue conjugal life without blaspheming the Creator.—St. Paul, I. *Cor.* c. vii., v. 12 and 13.

The bond, however, is only actually dissolved by the subsequent marriage or by the subsequent religious profession of the convert.

In these two cases not only does the obligation of conjugal life cease, but, the husband or wife who may thus be rendered free, either by the solemn vow made by the other party in the former case, or by the criminal conduct of the other party in the latter case of the unbeliever, may contract marriage again.

That the doctrine of indissolubility of marriage is a salutary doctrine we have already seen, chap. V.

The loosening of the bond between husband and wife is a loosening of the bonds which bind together human society.

Woman's indebtedness to the Church.

"Moreover, it is in this doctrine of the Church upon the indissolubility of the matrimonial contract that woman owes (as we have seen, chap. V.) her restoration to her once forfeited dignity and position, and it is to this unwavering doctrine of the Church that woman owes her present honourable rank and privilege, and it is in the maintenance of this doctrine in its integrity that woman's truest rights, security, and protection will be found.

To restore woman to her rightful place in the economy of the human race, to make man recognise her, acknowledge her, and treat her as his equal, with a personal dignity, as perfect as his own, was part of the mission of the Redeemer of mankind.

To this end He restored matrimony to its primeval type—as it was "in the beginning of the creation." He resealed it with its two essential characteristics of unity and indissolubility, and prohibited, as subversive of it, polygamy and divorce. He did more. He sanctified it by a sacrament. Sanctifying matrimony, He sanctified the family, and, sanctifying the family, He sanctified society. Society rested on the family;

the family rested on matrimony; and, when the matrimonial contract was elevated to the dignity of a sacrament, society was sanctified in its foundations, and at its centre. The result was Christendom, and in Christendom, the dignity of woman.

Roman Pontiffs, the champions of Woman's Rights.

The Roman Pontiffs have throughout past ages asserted and maintained the rights of woman. In defence of the rights of woman, England was lost to the Holy See. Had the Vicar of Him who restored matrimony, and invested it with a sacramental dignity, sacrificed the rights of one woman to satisfy the lawless desires of her royal husband, he would have sacrificed her sex; and, sacrificing her sex, he would have sacrificed society. Had it been but the sacrifice of a woman it might have been for the common good; but it was the sacrifice of woman. The Roman Pontiffs speak not to one age or nation, but to the world, and for all time; and never has their divine wisdom and their divine fortitude shown forth more resplendently than, when concerning Christian marriages, their voice has given no uncertain sound.

The Catholic and Roman Church, which restored the position of woman, clearly asserts, and unflinchingly maintains, her rights; and with the Catholic religion her position and her rights are bound up. Within the Catholic Church her dignity is assured; outside the Catholic Church she is at the mercy of her master.

Well may Christian women love the Roman Pontiffs; they are the sole champions of their Christian dignity, and they have never failed. Well may they mistrust a religion which has been to them but a broken reed; founded in the dishonour of their sex, and established, on what its founders sought to make, the ruins of Christian matrimony.

Philosophy and experience prove incontestibly the wisdom of the doctrine which renders Divorce an absolute impossibility."

Balmez on Divorce.

This is shown wisely and at greater length by Balmez. His unanswerable reasoning will be found recorded in extenso in the third part at the close of this volume. To this able and impressive dissertation attention is urgently solicited.

There will be found in that treatise an exposition of the wisdom of the Catholic Church in its doctrine as to the indissolubility of marriage, and the absolute prohibition of Divorce; and, at the same time, will be found an exposition of the evils which the revolt against the Church on this subject has occasioned.

Separation (*a mensâ et a thoro*) permissible.

Whilst Divorce, properly so called, is absolutely prohibited under all circumstances, and with regard to all classes of society, nevertheless, separation (*a mensâ et a thoro*), for sufficient cause, is permitted by the Church. The married pair are not compelled to live together (*nolens*

volens) under all circumstances, but, if separated, they may not remarry *vivente conjuge*.

Separation.

There may arise cases which, when submitted to the judgment of the Church, will obtain ecclesiastical sanction for separation, either for a time or for life.

Separation for life.

Separation for life would be lawful for a well-established charge of adultery.

Causes of temporary separation.

Separation for a time, or for an indefinite period, may be lawful for different causes, amongst which may be enumerated—heresy on the part of one of the parties, ill-usage or threats of murder, danger to health of body or soul, and, finally, malicious desertion, or the refusal of conjugal rights.

CHAPTER VII.

I.—MIXED MARRIAGES.

Their Condemnation and Prohibition.*

Union of faith essential to a holy matrimonial union—A mixed marriage opposed to the sanctity of marriage—Definition of mixed marriages—Condemnation of mixed marriages—The prohibition reasonable—The history of the prohibitory law reviewed—Its revelation (1) In the Old Testament,—(2) In the New Testament,—(3) In the unbroken ecclesiastical legislation of the church—Ceremonial and ritual in case of mixed marriages.

Union of faith essential for a holy matrimonial union.

"The church, throughout her long history, whilst proclaiming and inculcating the sanctity of Christian marriage, has ever taught her children that an essential condition for a holy union of hearts is the union which springs from identity of faith and religious worship.

"Marriage is a great sacrament, as the apostle tells us, in Christ and in the church. In a Christian marriage, to use the words of St. Augustine, its prime foundation shall be the union of two souls in one mind and one will. When two Catholics marry in Christ and in the church, they do not interchange the goods of the body, but the goods of the soul; faith

* Extracted, by kind permission of the Right Rev. the Bishop of Birmingham, from his "Pastoral Instruction," IV., Diocesan Synod, 1869.

marries faith, and grace is joined to grace. Such is the Christian ideal of holy marriage.

"Greatly opposed to this holiness of Christian marriage is the matrimonial union of persons disunited in faith, and who belong to different religious communities."

These unions are called mixed marriages.

Definition. A mixed marriage may be defined to be the matrimonial union of a Catholic with a non-Catholic, and is so called because of the difference of religious creed professed by the contracting parties.

The term mixed marriage is generally understood to be limited to the marriages contracted by Catholics and baptized persons.

Condemnation of mixed marriages. Mixed marriages are then greatly opposed to the sanctity of Christian marriage, and are fraught with innumerable evils.

"The Church has never ceased to prohibit them, and to declare them unlawful, pernicious, and disgraceful, as well, because of the communication in Divine things, as because of the indifferentism which they imply, because of the peril of the perversion, or, at least, of the great enfeeblement of faith in the Catholic party to the contract, and of the disastrous influences that commonly fall upon the children born of these marriages.

The prohibitory law reasonable. "Hard and stern as this prohibitory law may seem to the lax and indifferent, or

even to the better disposed Catholics, who have never sufficiently considered the subject, it is, in fact, both a reasonable, merciful, and charitable law, and, like all laws resting on Divine and unchangeable foundations, and preventive of great evils to human souls, it has been in force in all ages—even from the time when man was ejected from the earthly paradise of the first married pair."

History of the prohibitory law reviewed.

It may be well, therefore, to pause at the threshold of this important subject, and review the history of this prohibitory law in condemnation of mixed marriages as it is revealed to us—

(1.) In the Old Testament narrative.

(2.) In the doctrine preached by St. Paul in the new law, and

(3.) In the ecclesiastical legislation of the Church.

"In the first pages of Holy Writ we find the condemnation of mixed marriages.

Prohibition of mixed marriages in the Old Testament. *Gen.* vi.

The sixth chapter of Genesis shows how large a share mixed marriages had in bringing about that universal corruption which led God Himself to say that He "Repented that He had made man." For the sons of God, that is to say, the sons of Seth, who represented faith on the earth, married the daughters of men, that is, the descendants of Cain, who carried on the traditions of

unbelief. Reckless of spiritual considerations, the sons of faith married the daughters of unbelief from sensual motives, "because they were fair." And the inspired Scripture points to these unions as to the original cause of that universal corruption in remedy of which God sent the purging deluge. When the generations after the deluge had sunk anew into corruption, and idolatry had stifled faith and the true worship of God, God choose the patriarchs to worship Him in faith, and, that their faith might be preserved in their descendants, He inspired them to shun the daughters of the unbelieving races around them, and to seek their wives even from a distance, from the more religious race, of which they were descended. And when God, through Moses, gave His divine law to His chosen people, stern and uncompromising was the prohibition against their mingling in marriage with the children of unbelief. Indeed, the whole drift and provision of God's law was directed towards preserving the faithful from alliance with the populations that were devoid of faith, and the whole history of that people, from the time of Solomon, and after his sad example, goes to show that mixed marriages in defiance of God's law, and despite of the warnings of the prophets, were amongst the chief causes of the infidelities, the impieties, and sacrileges that forfeited for God's people the protection of God, brought heathen worship into the very palaces of their kings, and to the gates of the temple, and brought unutterable

calamities on the people. It is impossible to read the Old Testament with attention, and not see that the Divine prohibition of marriage between believers and unbelievers was a most benign and merciful dispensation, and that the neglect of it was ever accompanied with evils of the gravest description."

Prohibition of mixed marriages in the new law. *St. Paul.*

If we turn to the Church and the law of Christ, we shall find St. Paul laying down a rule for married converts from paganism, that clearly shows it was never contemplated that Christians should marry unbelievers.

The apostle tells the Corinthians: "If any faithful woman hath an unbelieving husband, and he consent to dwell with her, let her not put him away." "He is not speaking of those who are not yet married," as St. Chrysostom explains, "but of those who are already married; he does not say, if anyone wishes to take an unbeliever, but if anyone hath an unbeliever, that is, if anyone has received the faith whilst the consort remains in unbelief, if the other party consents to cohabit, let no separation be made." "But," says the apostle, "if the unbeliever depart, let him depart, for the brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God hath called us in peace. For how knowest thou, O woman, whether thou shalt save the husband? or, how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save the wife?"

The apostle intimates that if the unbeliever refuses

to live in peace with the believer, or, if he wantonly desert her, the marriage bond, which was not dissoluble merely because of the unchristian state of one party, may be dissolved in favour of the believer. Hence, by divine institution the Christian is permitted in such a case to contract a new marriage. But this is limited to the case of an unbeliever without baptism, for the marriage of two baptized persons is valid, whatever their state of unbelief.

St. Chrysostom says to the Christian party in explanation of St. Paul's words: "If he orders you to sacrifice to his idols, or to join him in impiety in your marriage, or to depart from him, it is better that the marriage be dissolved than that piety should suffer." But the whole of the apostle's instruction intimates, if it does not express, that a marriage between a Christian who was free, and one that was an unbeliever, was not to be thought of.

In short, the whole policy of the inspired Scriptures is directed to withstand the danger of corruption and perversion of soul to believers from so intimate an union as that of marriage with unbelievers. And with this principle in view, let us now come to the question of mixed marriages properly so called. So soon as heresies became rife, the Church proclaimed the unlawfulness of contracting marriage with heretics. She held to their validity, but she declared their unlawfulness and the danger of them,

Ecclesiastical prohibition of mixed marriages.

Decree of the council of Eliberis, A.D. 305.

and began her legislation against them. In the year 305, the council of Eliberis decreed that—"If heretics are unwilling to enter the Church, let not the daughters of Catholics be given to them. It pleases not the Church of God to give them to Jews or to heretics."

Decree of council of Laodicea, A.D. 365.

About 365, the Council of Laodicea decreed—"It behoveth not that members of the Church should join their sons indiscriminately in marriage with heretics." And in another canon—"It behoveth not to contract marriage with heretics, or to give sons or daughters to them; let them only be accepted if they promise to become Christians."

The Commentators, Balsamon and Zonaras.

Balsamon and Zonaras, in their comments on these canons, point out their intimate relations with those two other canons of the Church which prohibit the praying with heretics, or receiving a blessing from them.*

Communicatio in Divinis.

Decree of the council of Agatho, A.D. 506.

In 506, the council of Agatho declares that—"It is not befitting for Catholics to join marriage with all sorts of heretics, or to give their sons or daughters to them; only should they accept of them if they will become Christians and Catholics."

St. Thomas Aquinas.

Amongst the greater divines let it suffice to quote St. Thomas, who says:—"If one of the faithful contract marriage with a baptized heretic, the marriage is real, although he sins

* Beveridge. Pandectæ Canonum.

in contracting it, if he knows her to be a heretic, just as he would sin who should marry one that is excommunicated, yet this does not destroy the marriage."† That is to say, the Catholic sins in contracting such a marriage unless, for grave reasons, the Holy See, or its delegate, dispenses from the prohibitory law.

Pontifical prohibitory legislation from the 16th century.

Let us now turn to the doctrine and disciplinary decisions of the Holy See, which has held one uniform language on this subject. Especially have the Popes been instant against mixed marriages since the rise and spread of protestantism. And, although in his treatise on

Benedict XIV. vindicates the right of the Holy See to grant dispensation.

Diocesan Synods, the illustrious Benedict XIV. has vindicated the right and authority of the Holy See to grant dispensations for very grave reasons, and to prevent worse

Constitution addressed to Bishops of Poland.

evils, yet, in his constitution addressed to the Bishops of Poland, the great Pontiff affirms "the antiquity of that discipline with which

Mixed marriages reprobated.

the Holy See has ever reprobated the marriage of Catholics with heretics." He

Letters of Pope Clement XI.

quotes a letter of Clement XI., in which, replying to a petition for dispensation for a mixed marriage, the Pope says:—"We hold it of greater moment not to overpass the rules of God's church, of the Apostolic See, of our predecessors, and of the canons, unless the good of the whole Christian Republic requires it." And another letter of the same

† In 4. Sent. d 39. q. a. 1.

Pope, in which he says:—"For the Church, in truth, abhors these marriages which exhibit much of deformity in them, and but little spirituality."

Decree of Pope Benedict XIV. referring to Holland and Belgium.

Benedict XIV. next quotes his own earlier decree referring to Holland and Belgium, which, after the S. Cong. of the Council had discussed the question in his presence, he had pronounced with supreme authority.

Pontiff's grief on account of mixed marriages.

In that decree he declares:—"His extreme grief that Catholics can be found who, disgracefully deluded by an unhealthy affection, neither abhor these hateful marriages, nor abstain from them." And he "greatly commends those prelates who strive, even with severe penalties, to restrain Catholics from joining themselves in this sacrilegious bond with heretics." He seriously exhorts and gravely warns all bishops, vicars apostolic, parish priests, and missioners in Holland and Belgium "to do their utmost to deter and hinder Catholics from entering into this kind of marriage to the damage of their own souls." And where a mixed marriage has already been contracted, "the Catholic party, whether husband or wife, is to be sedulously brought to repentance for the grievous sin committed, and to ask pardon of God, and to strive to the utmost to bring the party erring from faith into the bosom of the Church, which will contribute greatly towards obtaining pardon for the sin committed."

Papal exhortation to Bishops, Priests, &c., to deter Catholics from mixed marriages.

Dispensations granted very rarely in past times.

The Pontiff adds that it was extremely rare for his predecessors to have dispensed except on the condition of the heresy being renounced, and that only in the case of the marriage of sovereign princes, to prevent great evils to the commonwealth; yet never without the condition of the Catholic being left free in the exercise of the Catholic religion, of the children being educated in Catholic holiness, or without the promise of making every effort to draw the heretical consort into the Church.

Pope Pius IX. A.D. 1858.

In the year 1858, Pius IX. issued an instruction on dispensing in mixed marriages, signed by Cardinal Antonelli, and addressed to all archbishops and bishops, in which he exhorts them "to keep the holy teaching of the Catholic church respecting these marriages most religiously, and in all its inviolable integrity." With "the ardent zeal of their pastoral office must they turn away the Catholics entrusted to them from these mixed marriages, and exactly teach them the doctrine of the Catholic church and its laws as affecting these marriages." He is convinced they will "keep for ever before their eyes the letters and instructions of his predecessors, and especially of Pius VI.,* of Pius VII.,† of Pius VIII.,‡ and of Gregory XVI.,§ which they addressed to many

* Pius VI. Epist. ad Archiep. Mechlinien et Episcopos Belgii, 1782.

† Pius VII. Epist. ad Archiep. Moguntinum, 1803.

‡ Pius VIII. Epist. ad Archiep. Colonien. et Episcopos Treviren, Monasterien, et Paderborn, 1830.

§ Gregory XVI. Epist. ad Archiep. et Episcop., Bavariæ, 1832. Instructio ad eosdem, 1834. Epist. ad Archiep. et Episcop., Hungariæ, 1841. Instructio, 1841. Instructio ad Archiep. et Epis., Austriæ-in-Germania, 1841.

bishops of the Catholic world concerning this most grave and momentous subject."

"All know," says the Pontiff, "what the Catholic church has always felt about these marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics, as she has always reprobated them because of the disgraceful communion in divine things, the peril of perversion impending over the Catholic, and the perverse training of the children." His Holiness insists that "if anything of the severity of the canons is relaxed, in dispensing by authority of the Holy See in mixed marriages, that can only be done for grave reasons, and with very great reluctance," and only on express condition of exacting all the prescribed conditions to guard against perversion, and to protect the Catholic education of the offspring. There is to be no mass, no blessing; whatever rite is allowed arises from the necessity of legalizing the marriage and preventing worse evils. And a main reason for thus treating mixed marriages the Holy Father tells us, is, "that Catholics may never forget the Church's law, nor let it out of mind, with what earnest endeavour our Holy Mother the Church has never ceased to warn her children, and deter them from contracting these mixed marriages to their own and their children's undoing."

Instruction of Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, A.D. 1868.

In the year 1868, the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda followed up this instruction with another, every sentence of which calls for the careful study and reflection of the

missionary clergy. Amongst other things, it is again urged upon us in this instruction that the precautionary promises exacted of the contracting parties are by no means a warrant of themselves for obtaining a dispensation. Reasons for the dispensation must be assigned that actually arise out of the individual case, and that are "altogether just and grave." For "the precautionary conditions are exacted by the natural and divine law, and that for avoiding the intrinsic dangers inherent in mixed marriages; but there must be some grave difficulty, that cannot otherwise be removed, impending on the faithful, before they can be allowed to expose their faith and morals to grave risks."

Ceremonial and ritual for mixed marriages.

A matter of importance, illustrating the mind and attitude of the Church in reference to mixed marriages, may be fitly and opportunely referred to here. A very marked and significant omission in the ritual, as well as a curtailed ceremonial, are brought before the notice of the faithful. The distinction and difference of ceremonial prescribed and observed in the case of a lawful and sanctioned marriage, and in the case of a mixed marriage must, when explained and understood, necessarily convey to all Catholics the unmistakeable judgment of the Church. In the case of a mixed marriage the ceremonial is deprived of the beautiful liturgy of the Church, and of its impressive and touching ritual.

This marked action, on the part of the Church,

brings home to the Catholic the gravity of the objection made to these unions.

In England, for a time indeed by indulgence, mixed marriages have been permitted to take place in the Church and at the altar. Elsewhere the parties are not allowed to stand before the altar, nor even in the Church.

Papal enactments.

We have just passed, in review, a series of papal enactments, extending over a long period of time, from which appears the reluctance with which each successive Pontiff has been induced to make concessions in this matter. The utmost limit of indulgence may now be considered to be attained. Nothing short of the gravity of the evils likely to ensue from a strict enforcement of the discipline of the Church could possibly have warranted the occasional toleration of mixed marriages. It may, however, serve to show the difficulty and embarrassment with

Temporary concessions.

which these occasional concessions have been made, when it is known that the Sovereign Pontiffs, whilst lamenting the necessity of the indulgence, and whilst expressing their sorrow and reluctance, nevertheless place upon the bishops of the countries and places concerned the obligation and responsibility of judging as to the urgency, necessity, and duration of the temporary deviation from the normal discipline of the church.*

Mixed marriage held in abhorrence.

A mixed marriage is held in such abhorrence, that, according to the discipline

* See Part III.

of the Church, if it must take place, it is to be arranged and peformed in the sacristy. The priest may not assist in his usual ecclesiastical robes. The ring that is to encircle the finger of the woman may not be blessed. No nuptial mass may be sung. No nuptial blessing may be given.

Such is the Church's discipline. If here in this country and elsewhere, for a time, special indulgence be extended; still, even here, the nuptial mass may not be sung, nor may the priest give the nuptial blessing.*

Council of Westminster.

Several of the canons of the Council of Westminster, in admonishing priests and pastors to observe all due precautions in securing the sanctity of Christian marriage, expressly exhort them to discountenance them, to forbid them, and, as far as possible, to prevent them.

* See Part III.

CHAPTER VIII.

II.—MIXED MARRIAGES.

Their Evil Consequences.

Violation of Ecclesiastical Law—Irreverence—Possible Sacrilege—Uncertain Baptism—Uncertainty as to intention and consent—Possible invalidity—Uncertain position of Catholic party—Difficulties as to Mutual Prayer; as to Religious Emblems; and as to the fulfilment of Religious Duties—Danger to faith in the case of the children—Previous promises often broken in their regard—Lessons supplied by experience—The first revelation of the practical unbelief of the non-Catholic—Irreverent language as to sacred things—The misery of the Catholic partner—Children not baptized—Trained in unbelief—Death-bed of the Catholic—Supposed cases of Mixed Marriages under the most favourable circumstances.

The first conception of a mixed marriage involves the idea of the violation of Ecclesiastical Law.

"Having considered what the law of the Church is, and has ever been, respecting these alliances, and with what reluctance and regret the Church has relaxed the law whenever she has done so for the prevention of worse results, we now come to consider the nature of the evils inherent in these marriages.

"Whilst even remotely contemplating a mixed marriage, a Catholic would be proposing a possible and a probable violation of the Church's salutary and prohibitory law.

Irreverence to Sacrament.

"When the parties to a mixed marriage approach the altar to be married before the minister of God, the non-Catholic appears in a church in which he does not believe, and unites in a solemn rite, in whose sacramental virtue he has no faith, and marries one in whose religion he has no interest. In the very moment of union they stand separated at an unspeakable distance from each other in all that concerns the soul—its faith, hope, and aspirations. And yet, even according to nature's law, as interpreted by the pagan codes, their unity of life ought to rest on unity of mind and heart.

Spiritual union frustrated in mixed marriages.

"If now we come to consider more in detail the nature of the intimate union which ought to exist between the parties to a marriage, we shall find how sadly this divinely-appointed end of marriage is frustrated in the case of a mixed marriage.

"Whilst, in a Christian marriage, to use the words of St. Augustine, its prime foundation should be the union of two souls in one mind and one will. When two Catholics marry "in Christ and in the Church" they do not interchange the goods of the body but the goods of the soul; faith marries faith, and grace is joined to grace. But, in a mixed marriage, the union stops short of the mutual interchange of the soul's goods, and the Church looks on at the spectacle with pain and sorrow, refusing to bless an union that reaches not to the interchange of her divine gifts.

No community of religious thought.

"Thus there can be no community of thought or feeling on what should ever be the chief sentiment of life. Never will they be able to act or to speak together on what concerns God, and the Church, and the soul, and the life to come. They can have no joint counsel, or even a feeling in common, concerning the spiritual welfare of a family. Marriage, in such a case, instead of being that help which God designed it to be, becomes a positive hindrance to salvation."

Hence, such a marriage is not a true emblem of the most intimate indissoluble union of Christ and His Church which every Christian marriage ought to be.

Irreverence to the Sacrament.

The Sacrament was received without faith by the non-Catholic party. Irreverence was therefore offered, even if sacrilege were not committed.

Possible Sacrilege.

But who shall say the Sacrament has not been profaned? What assurance has been obtained as to the valid baptism of the non-Catholic party?

If Christian baptism be wanting, the validity of the marriage contract is destroyed.

Furthermore, what certainly has been obtained as to the consent of the non-Catholic party to accept the essential conditions of the sacramental contract, namely, unity and indissolubility?

Legality of Divorce recognised by civil government.

We live in days when the government of the land tolerates Divorce, and recognises the legal right of all married persons, under certain circumstances, to separate and marry again. Now, they who should contract marriage, whilst openly or secretly reserving to themselves the right to separate and marry again, would, *ipso facto*, nullify the sacramental contract, and would leave the altar unmarried before God.

The uncertain position of the Catholic party.

How undesirable, therefore, must it be for a Catholic to contract a marriage with this double uncertainty.

There may ever be insecurity as to baptism. There may ever be uncertainty as to the acceptance of the essential condition of indissolubility.

There may ever be the uncertainty as to the validity of the marriage, and as to the consequent life of unlawful wedlock.

"There are, moreover, in a mixed marriage dangers threatening the Catholic party. Rare is it that the Catholic does not suffer considerable deterioration of soul, and, that indifference does not steal in and gain power where much management has to be practised and anti-Catholic influence is to be encountered, and that, amidst the most intimate and uninterrupted relations of married life. Courage may fail, faith may grow weak, human nature may weary of opposition, and at the last the sacraments may not be obtained; thus there is danger to faith and danger to salvation.

"The great majority of mixed marriages turn out badly, and lead to three miseries; they lead to the weakening or perversion of faith in the Catholic party to the marriage; to the loss of the Catholic faith, or to its being grievously dimmed in the children which spring from the marriage.

Difficulty as to mutual prayer.

"They cannot pray together; perhaps the non-Catholic party may not pray at all; the Catholic hesitates about the symbols of religion and the objects of piety; perhaps they are forbidden to appear. The Catholic faith is withdrawn from its outward manifestation into the secret soul.

Difficulty as to religious emblems.

Or if, where there is strong faith and pious courage, the outward expression of religion is insisted on, it is not improbably the beginning of quiet opposition, or of trying words, or of open contention. Sunday comes, and they repair to different places of worship. Perhaps the Protestant returns home with anti-Catholic denunciations sounding in his ears. The going to church so often, and especially to confession, and the earlier going to communion, are not understood,

Difficulty as to the fulfilment of religious duties.

perhaps are objected to, not merely on their own account, but as interfering with family arrangements. Then the Catholic wife has to contrive and manage these things, and this awakens suspicions and jealousies. In short, the Protestant husband has no true key to his wife's habits of soul, or to her religious movements.

Danger to faith in the case of the children.

"From what has been said, it will be easily understood how grave is the danger threatening the faith of the children of a mixed marriage.

"It is true that the non-Catholic has made every promise before marriage that all the children of both sexes shall be baptized and brought up Catholics. Yet none but those in a position to see what is passing in the different missions of this country can have any conception of the number of cases in which these promises are broken and set aside.

Previous promises in reference to the faith of the children often broken.

"A non-Catholic husband will have the boys baptized and brought up after his own way. The non-Catholic wife will have the girls follow her way. It is not unusual to find the non-Catholic insisting that no child of his or hers shall even enter a Catholic church, or be taught Catholic prayers. Then there are relations who interfere, or who bring the ministers of their own sect to interfere. And again, there is the fear of offending those who may benefit the child in a temporal point of view. Again, there is the influence of the non-Catholic father, or, the still more searching influence of the non-Catholic mother upon the child's heart and habits of thought; and, if nothing else, yet always is there the absence of Catholic influence on the part of one of the parents."

Lessons supplied by experience.

Let us now pass from the record of ecclesiastical prohibitions and pause to con-

sider the reasons which the every day experience of many priests supplies in justification of the Church's prohibitions, and in confirmation of all that is urged against the practice of mixed marriages. What pastor has not had experimentally brought before him in all their detailed circumstances and vivid reality the sad consequences of mixed marriages? We have already instanced a divided house as an example of one of the frequent evils of a mixed marriage. But what does this expression convey to the mind of one who has not personally witnessed it? What a picture of woe does the Catholic girl sometimes present after a short interval of married life! The reality has dawned upon her that he who meets her day-by-day shares not the instincts nor the reverence nor the love of the faith. Conscience may reprove her for carelessness or neglect, but not for irreverence or want of faith.

The unbelief of the non-Catholic.

What a terrible discovery is often made when he, who had before marriage restrained his tongue and concealed his thoughts, has once given expression to his unbelief, and has learned the secret of inflicting torture and agony by irreverent words, obscene allusions, and blasphemous aspersions in reference to sacred persons, places, and things. A life of sorrow and remorse now often begins. It may be concealed from neighbours. It may be known to few but God. But after years of suffering the priest is summoned to a sick bed to learn all from a dying

Irreverent language as to things sacred.

The misery of the Catholic partner.

woman. What a tale is then unfolded of a life of wretched misery. Brutal treatment, scalding, scathing, awful language have been her portion. Then as to the children? Sometimes to have insisted upon the fulfilment of the promises made to the Church would have been to incur serious bodily injury.

Children unbaptized.

Often has it been the lot of a Catholic to bring forth her children only to see them denied the waters of baptism and to be condemned;

Trained in unbelief.

to watch them day-by-day trained in disregard of all that she believes, and in contempt of all that she reveres as sacred.

Attendance at Church, or compliance with the Church's laws, has been difficult from the first. As time has passed to have mentioned the Church would have been to occasion sin.

The deathbed.

Life, therefore, has gone. Sickness has come, and death is imminent. The children are around, not baptized, not educated with a knowledge of the faith. The husband stands by, without being able to appreciate those strong and deep convictions, feelings, and desires which now harrass the dying Catholic. Before the assembled group the sick woman, mother, and wife has no word of complaint to utter. But as the priest has sat near her alone, and listened to the outpourings of a broken and scalded heart, he has understood how the iron has entered her soul. How bitterly she understands now the folly of

her youth, the sad misfortune of her children, the life-long sin and dissension of her home, and the past total neglect of the Church and her laws.

Picture not imaginary.

This description of a mixed marriage may seem to be an imaginary or an exceptional picture of sorrow. Unfortunately, this sad state of things is of frequent occurrence, and its reality may be corroborated by the experience of numberless priests.

Suppose the most favourable circumstances.

Still, let us suppose the picture a mere fancied scene. Let us grant, what we would fain desire, the most favourable circumstances for the Catholic party to a mixed marriage.*

"Let us suppose that the husband turns out to be the good honest fellow that he seemed to be before marriage—that he never bullies her about religion; does not even go on nagging at her about holy water and such 'rubbish;' never hides away her scapulars, or plays tricks with her beads, or pokes fun at her priest; does not growl at her for giving her big boy, who has just gone to work, bread and cheese for his Friday's dinner; that he really leaves her alone, and lets her do what she likes with the children. Let us suppose all this, and even then is a mixed marriage a harmless thing, or is it that terrible evil of which the Church is so much afraid?

Let us see. In a mixed marriage both the reasons

* Tract. Mixed Marriages. Rev. Fr. Bampfield.

that God had for making marriage at all are destroyed. One end of matrimony is mutual help to heaven.

A non-Catholic husband cannot, by any possibility, help a Catholic wife to keep the truth, or to practice her religion; but he may desire to draw her away from what he thinks to be error.

Temptations for the Catholic.

So the Catholic has to live her life, of her own accord, with a temptation. The Sunday's Mass; the Friday's abstinence; the monthly Confession and Communion; the holidays of Obligation; the sacred seasons, are not indeed an occasion of dissension. The promises are kept; the non-Catholic does not interfere with, or prevent the fulfilment of, duties. But he never promised to go to Mass, nor to abstain on a Friday, nor to fast, nor to observe solemn festivals.

Help not to be expected.

What help can there be expected in reference to Sunday's Mass? Is it not hard and difficult under more favourable circumstances? The husband never promised to put himself to inconvenience and stay in and mind the baby! The Catholic needs an example, an encouragement, a source of strength, for, poor human nature! Carelessness will creep over us all at times.

Sacraments needed. Reception difficult.

The Sacraments are dear to all Catholics, but how often it happens that sluggish nature has need of a stimulus to move us to approach the Sacrament of Confession at stated times. Will it be harder or easier now?

The husband may be of the best; he may even go to hear the music at church; he may like to see and converse with the priest; but what about the children growing up?

Church derided. Mother consoles. Father silent.

The boys will come home with tales of sorrow. Their non-Catholic companions have derided Church and Sacraments; denounced his Church as false, and the priests as bad men. The mother may strive to comfort and console, but the father sits still and says nothing; and, from his manner, the boys learn that father does not believe all that mother says.

From that time the son no longer drinks in the mother's teaching as he used to do, and he finds it harder to bear the laughter of the boys.

A son hearkens to the voice of parents as if it were the voice of God. But when they do not speak the same thing; when one teaches but the other is oddly silent, their voice is a divided voice, and is no longer to him the voice of God. The boy wonders and doubts instead of believing; and he is trained in the habit of doubt instead of the habit of faith. And, if doubt once gets into him, which religion has, so far as nature goes, the best chance of winning him? Side by side, in the same house, he has two examples, which to him have equal authority. He has, moreover, the example of the father absent from Mass, indifferent to Friday's abstinence, not frequenting the Sacraments of Con-

fession and Communion. Is it a wonder that, in such a case, the boy either forsakes his faith, or becomes that queerest and most miserable of things—a Catholic, who has taken all the bone and sinew out of his religion; all the fasting and prayer and the self-denial; and who sticks only to the soft and easy parts?

Now, suppose a still better state of things—that the husband has not made the Catholic wife cool about her faith, and that her children are growing up fast into Catholics, yet, for all that, it would have been far better for the Catholic not to have engaged in a mixed marriage.

Before the Catholic married, a promise was exacted and given, to do all that should be possible to win the non-Catholic to the faith. Now, to get her husband to heaven is the one great duty of a wife!

Well, is this easy at any time? Is it easier in the case of a mixed marriage? Let us suppose that all has been done for him that a good wife can do, and that he is still far from being a Catholic. The thought that he is still out of that one road to heaven will hang upon the Catholic wife like a load of lead. Besides this there may come the wearing fear, not only that she did not do enough to convert, but that her faults had driven him back from the Church. So life is weighted with a care.

Between the two hearts that should be one there is fixed the greatest gulf that can divide man from man—difference of worship and faith. Is this a happy

married life? Assuredly the Church is right when she keeps back her blessing from a mixed marriage.*

We have thus far sufficiently indicated the Church's mind and its decided condemnation and prohibition of mixed marriages. We have pointed out the reasons which form the ground of that condemnation. Moreover, we have appealed to the experience of those who have witnessed and been well acquainted with the different phases of married life in the case of mixed marriages. We may now proceed to consider what would be the prudent attitude and conduct of the pastors of the Church in this country in reference to the prevailing evil and practice of mixed marriages. Must the discipline be rigorous? Must the prohibitions be absolute? Must the condemnation be unconditional and uncompromising? Must the alternative offered be either submission and obedience, or excommunication and consequent apostasy?

The solution of these difficulties does not depend upon the abstract question of rectitude, but upon the peculiar and difficult circumstances of time and country. The problem to be solved is not, what is abstractedly the best, or what, *de facto*, is done in other countries, where circumstances are totally different, but rather which of two evils is the greater, and what may be the extenuating circumstances to be pleaded for any temporary toleration of nonconformity with the Church's well-known mind and wish upon the subject.

* Mixed Marriages. By the Rev. Fr. Bampfield.

CHAPTER IX.

IRRELIGIOUS MARRIAGES IN ENGLAND.

I. On the Present Toleration of Mixed Marriages in England. Plea of Justification. Preliminary Considerations as to Characteristics of Past Ecclesiastical Legislation.

Exceptional and extenuating circumstances of the small English Catholic body—Their social inferiority as to position, wealth, and influence—No alternative for a Catholic frequently but a mixed marriage, or grave loss of worldly and social advantages—Justifying reasons for toleration—Dangers to faith not yet *formalia peccata*—Natural law may cease to bind—Hence further repressive measures not to be recommended at the present moment—Rather urge, persuade, exhort, instruct still more—Objections answered—Introduction of inflexible discipline would lead to greater evil results—The case of other countries not analogous.

The object of this essay has been to expound the doctrine of the Church with regard to the sanctity of marriage, and with special reference to the Conference Case which is about to be placed under consideration. In this Conference Case we are brought face to face with the evils of mixed, civil, and irreligious marriages which prevail at the present time in this country, and which threaten to be subversive of the ideal of Christian marriage.

The evils of mixed marriages have been already enumerated, and the reasons for their prohibition and condemnation have been exhaustively discussed.

Before, however, passing to the considerations of the evils of civil and irreligious marriages as they obtain exclusively amongst Catholics, it may be well to give further consideration to the subject of mixed marriages, and to inquire whether, after all that has been advanced in condemnation of such marriages, there be any just cause for their further temporary permission in this country.

The case of the English Catholics is at present somewhat exceptional. Its special circumstances must be considered before a correct judgment can be formed as to their difficulties. Before discussing these difficulties it may be well to make a few preliminary observations in reference to the characteristics of past ecclesiastical legislation.

What remedy advisable.

It might appear to some persons that the magnitude of the evils arising from the continued mixed marriages of English Catholics calls for an immediate and speedy remedy, such as the application of all the resources at the Church's command, and the exercise of all her penalties *in terrorem*. In a word, drastic measures might appear to be the only solution of the perplexing problem which is about to be proposed for consideration.

Past legislation suggests caution.

Before coming to that conclusion, however, it will be well to keep in mind the history of the past legislation of the Church. The great and wonderful results achieved in the conversion of nations, and in the reformation of conduct in reference to marriage were not suddenly effected, but were the gradual work of time. It must also be borne in mind that nearly the whole of the present existing legislation of the Church, with its sanctions and prohibitions, its laws and discipline, has been the outcome of a long and unceasing struggle.

Terrible was the combination of forces arrayed against her in the early ages of the Church, as we have already seen.* Inflexible and determined was the spirit of resistance displayed in opposition to the laws of the new dispensation, and in defiance of ecclesiastical discipline on the subject of marriage. Each successful struggle, and each fresh abuse, called for special legislation. That legislation, with its unbroken tradition and accumulated store of wisdom and experience, is our heritage. Here may be gathered the principles and wisdom best calculated to guide and direct aright the action of the pastors of souls in their efforts to dissuade and persuade, as the case may be, the minds of the faithful.

Lessons suggested by past history for present evils.

Whilst then taking counsel in this our day, as pastors are bound to do, in reference to the widespread evils and abuses which

* Part I.

exist in reference to Christian marriage, the characteristics of all the past legislation of the Church may be profitably borne in mind.

Duty of vigilance.

The history of the Church is distinguished throughout by untiring vigilance on the one hand, and by prudent caution on the other hand. Guided by that example then, the pastors of the Church to-day will not fail to fulfil the duty of unceasing watchfulness and prudent caution.

Not only must directive rules and regulations from time to time be promulgated, but the true doctrines of the Church on all points concerning Christian marriage must be frequently inculcated.

The wisdom of *Festina Lente.*

Moreover, reference to ecclesiastical sanctions and prohibitions will be opportune. Nevertheless, there must ever be observed, now, as in all past times, the slow and cautious action of the wise, prudent, and experienced legislator. There must be the clear recognition of the difference of times and circumstances.

It must be well understood when first principles are at stake, and when they are not imperilled.

Whenever principles and doctrines are not compromised it may be expedient, under certain circumstances, to tolerate evils and abuses. There may be occasions when, under given conditions, it may be more prudent to concede than to refuse. There will

also be a time when it will be necessary to be firm and uncompromising, and even to deter; in a word, there must ever be displayed the wisdom of the adage *Festina Lente.* Circumstances of time and place have always had to be considered in dealing with grave and delicate questions. Consequences have ever had to be narrowly scanned and measured in all their imports before decisions could be made.

Mixed marriages in England.

What is to be said in reference to the present evils of mixed marriages now prevailing in England? Whilst their existence will be deplored by all, and whilst all will be united in desiring their speedy extermination, can there be offered any satisfactory reasons for their temporary permission?

Special Case of English Catholics.

Present extenuating circumstances

The English Catholic body is insignificantly small. But fifty years have passed since their chains and fetters were struck off. Then came their emancipation from restrictive laws, and their partial restoration to religious freedom.

They live in the midst of a large non-Catholic population, having, comparatively speaking, all the attractions and allurements of position, wealth, social advantages, and comforts of life.

Frequently necessity allows the Catholics no other choice but a mixed marriage, except at the cost of grave sacrifices and serious disadvantages.

A limited social circle, restricted in means and inferior in point of social advantages, is frequently the lot of the Catholic to whom some attractive and advantageous offer presents itself from the non-Catholic body.

However undesirable, therefore, these mixed alliances may be, and however much to be disapproved and discouraged, it is not at once obvious that further repressive measures would be prudently introduced in order to diminish them, or that further difficulties should be raised beyond those already in existence. The persuasive efforts of the clergy, which can and must now be made more earnestly than ever; exhortations, instructions, wise and judicious counsel, frequently and publicly reiterated, together with a full and frequent exposition of the weighty reasons which move the Church to prohibit mixed marriages, appear for the present to be sufficient to meet the desired end.

It must be remembered that the prohibitions of the Church sometimes suppplement the prohibition of the natural and divine law, which, in this case, is not absolute, but general, and admits, therefore, of exceptions calling for ecclesiastical legislation, and, in extreme cases, for dispensation.

Now, since the prohibition of the natural and divine law, in the case of mixed marriages, is founded upon the danger of perversion of faith in the case of the Catholic party, and upon the danger which threatens

the children in the matter of Christian education, and since then dangers have not yet become a necessary occasion of sin, *i.e.*, *formalia peccata*, it is possible for the Church on account of weighty reasons (as in the case of the promise and fulfilment of certain conditions), to decide that the natural law ceases to bind altogether, or at least does not bind under grave inconvenience, and with grave penalties, and accordingly to grant what is known as a dispensation for a mixed marriage.

Natural law may be thought to cease to bind altogether, or not under grave inconvenience.

Moreover, it may be further emphatically stated that, although the Church has ever unequivocally condemned mixed marriages when contracted *without a dispensation*, nevertheless, when contracted *with a dispensation* and *(ex justa causa)* with a just cause, such marriages have not been stigmatised or regarded by the Church as intrinsically wrong.

Therefore further repressive measure to be deferred.

With this doctrinal exposition, and with the knowledge of the difficulties and disadvantages at present pressing upon the small body of Catholics in England, it would seem to be the wise and prudent course not to enforce the ecclesiastical condemnation of mixed marriages to the utmost limit by absolute and unconditional prohibition, or by any other means which would drive Catholics from the Church in despair.

The opinion just expressed as to the expediency of the prolonged temporary permission of mixed marriages

in England under the special circumstances and conditions already indicated, is not offered, it is scarcely necessary to state, as implying any condonation or approval of these unholy unions.

The solemn prohibitions and condemnations of the Church, and the reasons already alleged for these prohibitions, are sufficient to convince all persons of the evils and misfortunes of mixed marriages. It is not, then, a question of approval or disapproval.

Crucial point.

The crucial point of the matter lies in the judgment to be formed of the magnitude of two great evils. We have to decide which is the more lamentable, the further temporary toleration of the misfortune of mixed marriages, or the probable disaster of widespread apostasy from the faith, and consequent hostility to the Church. It might appear to some persons that firm and decided measures, which should practically enforce to the letter the ecclesiastical prohibition of the Church, and the law which directs pastors, to refuse to sanction these marriages, would succeed in arresting the frequency of mixed marriages, and bring about a speedy reformation of the present abuses in regard to the celebration of Christian marriage. It might be urged, with apparent plausibility, that although for a time losses might occur, very soon the Church would be amply and quickly repaid by the subsequent docility and obedience of her children.

Minority of English Catholics.

In reply to this view of the subject it is necessary to draw attention once more to the small minority of Catholics in England, and to the grave and very serious worldly disadvantages which must result from such a course of procedure. Were the Catholics in England in greater numbers; did they form any fair proportion of the people of the country; or were they equal in social position, rank, wealth, and influence generally, then the altered circumstances of the case would perhaps permit such suggested legislation. Were circumstances favourable to the formation of a sound public opinion which could reasonably be expected to exercise an adverse influence upon the practice of mixed marriages, then the rapid and total cessation of these marriages would follow as the natural consequence of altered conditions, and especially in the absence of any further necessity for their celebration.

Example of other Catholic countries not analogous.

The case of other countries, where mixed marriages are not allowed to take place, and where priests refuse to sanction, or preside at, their celebration, and where public opinion is found to denounce and condemn them, is not analogous to the peculiar and special case of English Catholics.

It is much to be feared that the consequences of an inflexible discipline (if now introduced throughout England) would be the inevitable loss of countless souls, the further loss of all the children of such mixed

marriages, the bitter and unrelenting estrangement of the Catholics who would have been driven in despair from their Church and altar, and who would have been compelled to receive at the hands of others the ministrations which they could only value when given by the priests of the Catholic Church. This estrangement, which would frequently develop into bitter hostility, and which would be communicated to many of the present generation, as well as to many of the generations yet unborn, cannot be over estimated. The proportions of this inevitable contumacy, and the widespread evils resulting from this inflexible discipline, would soon be found to be of a gigantic nature.

The absence of mixed marriages from the Catholic Church would, indeed, be secured, but the actual diminution of their number would be very small.

On the other hand, the only result might be to multiply indefinitely the number of Catholics who would present themselves before the Protestant minister and at the office of the registrar.

Under these circumstances we have no alternative but to choose the less of two great evils. Rather than run the risk of this threatened loss of souls now, and of generations to come, will it not be better to let wise counsels prevail, and let the present unsatisfactory and mischievous state of things continue a little longer, until the Catholic body shall have increased in numbers, wealth, and position; until they have gained a fair chance of avoiding inevitable disparity of social

standing; and until a reasonable opportunity is afforded of forming a sound public opinion to do away with mixed marriages? In the meantime, be it observed, it is not proposed to encourage mixed marriages, nor to palliate their evil character, nor to excuse and countenance them, nor in any way to facilitate them further than is done at present. On the contrary, much may be gained if there should be introduced a greater uniformity of action on the part of the clergy, a greater unanimity as to the precise line of conduct to be pursued, and a greater *consensus* as to the counsel and direction to be given.

Furthermore, there is full scope and there is a fair field for the use of all the persuasive and dissuasive means which pulpit, altar, and confessional can supply. It would then not be unreasonable to predict, that greater and more zealous efforts, together with a more combined and united course of action, would greatly lessen the number of mixed marriages.

This reasoning seems to be in harmony with a Papal Instruction forwarded to the Bishops of Bavaria and to the Bishop of Hungary, by order of Pope Gregory XVI.*

The letter refers to the question of expediency of conduct to be observed by parish priests in the case of mixed marriages, *contracted without a dispensation*, and contains these words :—

"Undoubtedly it is better that such marriages be celebrated in the presence of the Catholic priest in

* Part III.

order that by this means there may be retained and maintained a friendly relation between the priest and his parishioners, notwithstanding the disgraceful violation of the divine and ecclesiastical law. Much better this than that the priest should drive the parties away entirely from the Church, and thus plunge them into a still more terrible calamity." (*Instr. ad episcopos Bavariæ. Et ad epis., Hungariæ,* 12 Sept., 1834. *Et* 30 Ap., 1841.)

Thus by analogy it would seem prudent to infer that the line already marked out for the action of the clergy in England is the proper and wise course to pursue, so long as the Catholic body is small, and so long as there exists the well grounded fear of large defections from the Church; and especially if dispensations can always be secured *ex justa causa.*

The Council of Westminster (*additio IX.*) also by parity of reasoning, and by analogous instructions, appears to be in perfect accord with the suggested course of prudent caution. The words are:—

DECREES OF THE COUNCIL OF WESTMINSTER.
(ADDITIO IX.)

"When there is danger that persons who desire to contract marriage, even in the greater degrees of relationship, will threaten to have recourse to a Protestant minister (or registrar) for the celebration of their marriage, in spite of the Church's refusal, and in contempt of ecclesiastical authority, there is then

found, *ipso facto*, a just cause for granting a dispensation. The reason is, because not only is a grave scandal to the faithful imminent, but there is a well grounded fear of the total loss of faith by those who act in this way, especially in those countries where heresy is greatly in the ascendant."—*Instr. St. Congreg.*, 17 Ap., 1820.

This, then, may be considered sufficient to justify the suggestions already given for patient and zealous persuasion, rather than for a course of severe and inflexible discipline, at least so long as the circumstances of the Catholic body in England remain unaltered.

Having now considered at length the plea for the temporary permission of mixed marriages in England, we pass now to consider another grave difficulty which forms an important part of the consideration suggested by the proposed Conference Case.

This further difficulty with which we are confronted at the present time, is found in the widespread evil of "Irreligious Marriages" as they obtain, not amongst Catholics and non-Catholics, but exclusively amongst Catholics.

II.—IRRELIGIOUS MARRIAGES.

Low estimate of Christian marriage.

This difficulty is, again, twofold. It brings before us the undoubted fact that there exists, amongst a large section of Catholics, a widespread ignorance, and, consequently, a very low estimate and standard, and a very debased conception of the high, noble, and sacred character of Christian marriage.

This either results in an utterly, unworthy, and unprepared reception of the Sacrament in the presence of the Church's ministers, and with the violation of many of the Church's salutary and disciplinary directions, or it is displayed in the deliberate neglect of the Church, her teaching, her ministers, and her laws. This is done by an act of public scandal, and of implied apostasy from her rule, by the pretended acknowledgment of the jurisdiction and authority of the Protestant Church, or of the civil power in the important matter of Christian marriage.

Recourse for marriage to the Protestant Church or Registrar's Office.

Civil marriages frequent.

Hence, marriages in the Protestant Church, and also what are called "civil marriages" before the Registrar, are not unfrequent. Catholics are known to forsake their own Church and appear in the presence of a Protestant minister, or at the office of the Registrar of Marriages, and there go

through the legal form necessary for the validity of their marriage.

Evils of this irreligious proceeding.

How many and how serious are the evils of this irreligious and profane proceeding is a matter known to the pastors of souls in every mission, and is one of the special points of the Conference Case about to be considered.

Loss of sacramental graces and blessings.

Ignorance of duties and obligations.

Not only is there no blessing sought at the time of marriage, and not only are there no graces solicited for the fulfilment of the duties of that state, but the contract is made without a thought or a care of the Christian ends, duties, and obligations of this holy state of life.

Neglect of children.

The offspring of these marriages is often neglected. Brought up in an irreligious house, the children are not taught by word or example the first principles of a Christian life. If they are not sent to unchristian schools they do not fall under the notice of the pastor, except to appear as the irregulars and the incorrigible of his school.

Encyclical of present Pontiff already quoted denouncing civil marriages.

Now, if warning and instruction were needed for Catholics as to the unwarranted assumption by the civil power of jurisdiction over Christian marriage, we have only to recall the beautiful words of Pope Leo XIII., our present Pontiff, in his Encyclical Letters already quoted.

Thus, we are not only confronted with the difficulty arising from the evils of mixed marriages, but we have the further difficulty of irreligious marriages in which Catholics alone are exclusively concerned. We have amongst us a section of people who have a low estimate of marriage, and who either come to the Church unprepared to receive a Sacrament, or who repair to the Protestant minister or Registrar for the celebration of their marriage.

These, then, are the difficulties which pastors have to face. These evils have to be checked. Remedies have to be found. No pains must be spared. No labour must be refused. Each pastor must say: "This is the work which Thou hast given me to do." "Now, I have begun." "This is a change effected by the right hand of the Most High." "I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me." "Nothing is impossible with God."

Exposition of Conference Case.

Having considered the evils of mixed marriages, and having glanced at the two-fold difficulty of irreligious marriages as it is about to be explained and presented to us in the form of a Conference Case, and having seen these evils to be directly opposed to the sanctity which ought to precede, preside at, and follow the nuptial union of Christian people, we may now endeavour to form some idea of the anxiety of the Bishop of Salford, who recently brought to light the revelation

Bishop's anxiety for his diocese.

that his diocese was honey-combed with their disastrous results.

We may also be led to consider more carefully, and appreciate more intimately, the Conference Case which has been formulated, and which embodies and represents actual evils pressing for an immediate and practical remedy. More favourably and perhaps less critically will the suggestions and solutions be received when it is acknowledged that we are not engaged in theorising and speculating, or in framing theological problems, or in airing theological knowledge, but in the serious task of laying the axe to the root of the tree, and of devising plans and methods of procedure which may more or less supply the necessary amelioration of these evils.

Need of practical suggestions.

It may be premised, in approaching the solution of the case which is now to be considered, that we have to deal with a terrible and widespread social evil underlying the proposed difficulties, of which no mention has been made in the Conference Case, but which can neither be ignored nor regarded as irrelevant or accidental, or as a separate or distinct factor in the calculations which have to be made.

Premised widespread evils of intemperance.

A very large proportion of our poor Catholic population, amongst whom most of these evils spring, is formed of a section or residuum of the lowest class. Their difficulties and their super-added intemperance

and improvidence have resulted, in many cases, in settled destitution, and a total surrender of themselves to vicious courses.

They are, indeed, professing Catholics, but are not practically amenable to the Church's laws or discipline. They retain the name, but no longer lead the lives of Catholics.

In dealing with this "large class" it is useless to offer prescriptions and advice for instructions and exhortations to be delivered from altar or pulpit.

This class is not found in the Church, nor at the Sacraments. They are not married in the Church, or, if married there, they have not prepared, worthily, for the reception of a Sacrament. Their children are not brought sufficiently within the sphere or influence of priest or teacher.

Absentees from Church.

If the people who need information upon the points about to be submitted for consideration in the Conference paper, were in weekly attendance at Church, or were amenable to exhortation and advice, and not sunk in poverty, apathy, sloth, and intemperance, the difficulty would lose its proportions, and the task would prove comparatively easy.

Exhortations, instructions, and every spiritual and ecclesiastical means at command, employed in season and out of season, in the church, and from the pulpit, might then be thought the sure means of success. But

in dealing with this large section of absentees, who have not always clothes in which to appear, nor money, and sometimes not even food, and most of whom intemperance, like a foul plague, demoralizes and paralyzes, we may safely assume that the Church is no longer the arena where the battle must be fought.

The problem is complex, most difficult of solution, and that solution will be different and varied, according to the special circumstances of particular localities.

It may seem, therefore, idle to offer suggestions, which to one may appear unnecessary, to another imprudent, or to another impracticable, and to very few satisfactory.

Proposed solution.

If, however, the evil is not to be left to grow and develop; if the waters of the foul stream are not to be allowed to flow on altogether unchecked; if any successful influence is to be brought to bear upon this deplorable state of things; the remedy must have for its first object, as a *conditio sine qua non*, the earnest attempt to effect the miraculous cure of the plague and raging pestilence of intemperance. In attempting this, the priest must not shrink from such open-air and street preaching, as well as such house-to-house, ministerial, catechetical, and sacramental work, as priests of apostolic zeal may be found to accomplish for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Anything short of a crusade of this kind to cope with

Open-air exhortation.

House-to-house, ministerial, and sacramental work.

the evils of intemperance, and anything short of united co-operation on the part of the clergy with the object of bringing light and knowledge to the homes of the people, would seem but to touch the fringe of the question.

Take the Church to the people.

The difficulty appears to be, not how we are to get this section of the people to the Church, but how we are to get the Church to them and into their midst.

Cursory visits for exhortation to attend Church, or for reproaches for absence from Church, in the case of those destitute of money, food, and clothing, will prove so much time lost, and perhaps so much harm done; whereas, a short instruction, a short Rosary, or an extempore Confessional in a cottage, and an occasional Mass in the different courts and alleys of a large town previously arranged, might have a salutary effect. Such suggestions as these may appear quixotic and unpractical, and it may be conceded that they can never be entertained, much less carried out, except by those who are persuaded of their necessity and value.

Past precedents.

It may not, perhaps, however, be out of place to mention that this practice is by no means unknown in the history of the Church.

The public instruction of Our Blessed Lord was carried into the midst of the people, and was often

given by means of house-to-house visitation, and by open-air preaching. The missionaries of every country have had recourse to the same plan, and have ever acknowledged the necessity as well as the efficacy of the practice.

In Catholic countries such methods are not unfrequent, and in this country again and again it has been *tried with success* by *individual* priests.

Second class of Catholics.

2. Turning now to that very large and important and hope-inspiring section of the community, who actually do come to Church and are present at the services, who occasionally frequent the Sacraments, and who are amenable to the laws and discipline of the Church, and the spiritual direction of their pastors, it will be admitted by all, that under present circumstances, there is need of special efforts in their regard.

This section needs careful instruction in Church.

To counteract Protestant influence.

Catholics are exposed, as is well known, to the fatal and paralyzing effects of a Protestant atmosphere, and to the contagion of Protestant influence, habits, fashions, and opinions, with which they are ever being brought into contact.

Unremitting exertions, therefore, are needed on the part of priests, both in the pulpit and in the Confessional, to counteract this evil influence, and to prevent further defection amongst the faithful. Moreover, solicitude must be shown in confirming the

courage and piety of the good; in endeavouring to increase the knowledge, and strengthen the convictions of the weak and wavering; in creating a Catholic public opinion as to proper Christian action and conduct; and in spreading, on every side, a powerful influence calculated to win over and convert the apathetic and neglectful amongst the Catholic community.

End of First Part.

PART II.

PROPOSED

CONFERENCE CASE;

QUESTIONS AND SOLUTIONS.

CHAPTER XI.

Full Exposition of the Conference Case and of the Difficulties Proposed by the Priest Titius, together with Suggested Replies.

Object of Conference Paper to expose present evils in reference to Marriage, and to elicit suggestions as to remedies—Conference Case stated—Difficulties grouped under five heads—Answers to questions and difficulties given seriatim.

The following case drawn up with the view of putting before a Conference of the Clergy an account of some of the pressing evils existing in a certain diocese, in reference to the violation of the Church's laws and teaching on the subject of Christian marriage, describes a zealous priest toiling in the midst of a large mission, and filled with dismay at the widespread ignorance of the Church's teaching in reference to the sanctity of marriage. Anxious and perplexed, he has recourse to his brethren for some solution of his difficulties, and for some guidance and consolation in the prosecution of his difficult task. The case, as usual, is proposed at length. His difficulties are then described, and arranged in five questions.

CONFERENCE CASE.

ON THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE.

Titius is in charge of a large mission, and is deeply concerned for the souls committed to his care. He is much struck with the appalling evils arising from the low estimate in which the sanctity of marriage is held. He hears of marriages taking place in the Registrar's office and in the Protestant Church. He is constantly harassed with *mixed marriages*, and the majority of marriages which take place in his church are unsatisfactory, owing chiefly, he thinks, to the people's ignorance of the greatness of the Sacrament, and of the duties it involves.

This abuse bears bitter fruit, for the children of such marriages must, like their parents, be irreligious. They are to be found in Board schools and Protestant schools; they are the irregular attenders at his own school; and after the years of schooling are passed, they are lost sight of, until, perhaps, they themselves come to present themselves for marriage.

Titius, grievously disturbed in his conscience, asks the following questions:—

I. Can he, in conscience, allow these evils in reference to Christian marriage to continue without making special efforts to check them?

II. He is told that the people must be instructed. Upon what points should he instruct parents in their duties to children, with a view to preventing irreligious marriages?

How should he treat parents in the tribunal of penance with the same view?

III. What points of instruction should he choose when speaking in the pulpit—

(1.) On the subject of Christian marriage?

(2.) As to the remote preparation for marriage—*e.g.*, Company keeping?

(3.) As to the immediate preparation for marriage?

IV. How should he deal in Confession with those who keep company?

V. What must he do with those who are keeping company with Protestants?

CHAPTER XII.

REPLIES TO THE CONFERENCE CASE ON THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE.

Synopsis of Replies to Question I.

Preliminary remarks—Personal suggestions for Titius as a zealous priest—Direct reply—Efforts for people as Pastor Bonus—Two classes to be considered:—1st. Absentees from Church. 2nd. Regular attenders at Church—Efforts for absentees—These often improvident and intemperate—Temperance crusade absolutely necessary—Reproaches for non-attendance at Church of no avail—The Church must be taken into their midst by open-air preaching, &c. The following points of instruction suggested:—Parents duties to children in detail—Explicit condemnation of mixed marriages—Explanation of reasons for their prohibitions—Importance of a Catholic education for their children in Catholic schools—Description of a Catholic school with its religious emblems, &c.—Contrast Catholic schools with Protestant and Board schools—Explain the reasons for the Church's prohibition of such schools for Catholic children—A Catholic parent's first consideration should be faith and morals—Explain the following objectionable points in a non-Catholic school:—(1) Absence of Catholic emblems—(2) Absence of Catholic prayers and teaching—(3) Absence of Catholic teachers—(4) Absence of Catholic priests—(5) Absence of all reference to Sacraments—Holy Mass and Church—(6) Adverse influences on the part of teachers and companions—Neglect of duties, and frequent apostasy the consequence—Further instructions for parents—Protection of their young girls—Watchfulness as to their acquaintances—Need of their protection from dangerous liberties—Parents to entertain and to inculcate a high conception of marriage—Parents to teach their

children the necessity of due preparation for marriage, and also the advantage of the nuptial blessing—Consolations offered to Titius if he accept the suggestions to carry his instruction into the midst of the people—A reverent reception assured him—Respectful attention guaranteed—Immediate good results predicted—If he once secure the diminution of intemperance and the spread of sobriety, the battle will be won and the victory will be gained.

Replies.

Can he allow these evils to continue without checking them?

First Question.—Can he, in conscience, allow those evils to continue without making special efforts to check them?

Priest to act as Pastor Bonus.

Reply.—No. A priest is bound, at least in charity, to act the part of Pastor Bonus in reference to the flock over which he is placed.

If then, exceptional evils and dangers are not only threatening, but are actually destroying it, exceptional means and remedies should be employed to check and exterminate them.

What the special efforts should be we are not asked in the paper to enumerate and discuss; nevertheless, in order that we may not seem to evade the difficulty, a few suggestions may be offered as suited to the emergencies of the case.

Section I.—Personal Suggestions for Titius.

Sacerdotal zeal.

First Suggestion.—The first suggestion, as to special efforts, will be personal to Titius.

The courage and light to adopt and carry out any special means requiring unusual efforts, as well as the measure of success to be looked for, must depend, in some degree, upon the acceptable character of the instrument—priest or layman—who proposes to do any great things for God.

When Titius has done all in his power, he has still to remember the words of St. Paul: "I have planted, Apollo watered; but God giveth the increase."—(I. *Cor.* iii.) And again the words of the Psalmist: "Not unto us, O Lord, but to Thy name be the glory."

Titius, as a priest, will naturally recall frequently the words of his Divine Master, intimating the necessity of personal virtue and sanctity of life as a condition of apostolic success.

"You are the light of the world." "You are the salt of the earth." "Let your light so shine before men that they may glorify My Father who is in heaven."

His first solicitude must be to win grace for his people by a priestly, virtuous, penitential life. A sedulous and faithful discharge of all priestly duties, such as the recitation of the Divine Office, and the devout celebration of daily Mass, must be carefully attended to.

It may also serve to promote apostolic zeal to recall

the words of the Holy Spirit addressed to a tepid pries and bishop :—

"I know thy works that thou art neither hot nor cold; I would that thou wert cold or hot; but, because thou art lukewarm, I will begin to vomit thee out of My mouth.....".—*Apoc.* iii. "Be zealous, therefore, and do penance;" and again, "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts; and I will not receive a gift of your hand."—*Malachi* i.

Titius will also remember, when trying to accomplish a gigantic task such as that of assailing and vanquishing Satan in the stronghold of irreligious marriages, that it is recorded of the apostles, when unable to succeed in a difficult work, that they received from Our Blessed Lord the revelation of the secret of their failure and of His success. Why could not we cast him out? they asked. "And, He said to them, this kind can go out by nothing but by prayer and fasting.—*Mark* ix. 27.

Another Personal Suggestion.

Another personal suggestion to Titius will be to urge a frequent memento to be made of the spiritual wants of his people, not only in his Mass and in the recitation of his Breviary, but also in his intercourse with his people. Let frequent recommendations be made to the prayers of children, to the Catholics attending his Church, as well as to the charity of religious communities.

Above all, let him establish a frequent and devout congregational recitation of the Rosary, and inculcate a special Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

Let him propose frequently and earnestly the Blessed Virgin as the model of youth, and particularly of Christian girls, and women married and unmarried, in the matter of purity, modesty, propriety of behaviour, and becoming decorum in deportment and conduct.

Section II.—Suggested Efforts for his People.

What special efforts ought Titius to make in regard to his people?

Two classes of people.

Reply.—Titius has two classes or sections of his people to consider and legislate for separately.

The first section consists of those Catholics of the district who come more or less regularly to Church.

For this class the special efforts to be made will be enumerated in the reply which will be given under the second heading or question.

The second section or residuum of his people will probably consist of those who may be described as

Absentees.

absentees from Church and Sacraments—*i.e.*, Catholics in name, but living in habitual neglect of the Church, and in confirmed habits of improvidence and vice.

Now, if on inquiry it be found that the evils complained of by Titius exist chiefly amongst this

section of his people, let him ascertain whether a continued absence from Church and Sacraments may not be ascribed to intemperance, improvidence, and consequent destitution. If this be so, the first condition of any successful pastoral efforts must be a crusade of some kind, in some shape or form, against intemperance. This must be undertaken for the purpose of raising the people out of a state of degradation to a sense of self-respect, and to a state of mind and body capable of receiving instructions, graces, and sacraments.

Temperance crusade, a *conditio sine qua non*.

2. The next suggestion may be included in the following words:—

No reproaches, but carry Church into their midst.

For the present be not solicitous about visiting the people with a view to reproach absentees, and to induce them to be present at Church, but rather let the solicitude be shown in the endeavour to take, in some way or other, the Church into their midst, by adopting some or all of the following means:—

Pastoral visits.

(*a*) Frequent and regular pastoral house-to-house visits in poor localities, alleys, courts, and back streets.

Open-air preaching.

(*b*) Short, earnest, and zealous public instructions and exhortations in the open air, to small groups as well as to larger gatherings.

Rosary.

(*c*) The devout recitation of the Rosary in some convenient place or cottage.

Sacrament of Penance.

(*d*) The administration of the Sacrament of Penance to boys and men, invalids, and aged women.

Holy Mass amongst the people.

(*e*) The celebration of Mass on a portable altar (*cum permissu superiorum*), previously announced, at a convenient hour, in the most suitable place for the attendance of the people.

Instruction on marriage.

(*f*) Frequent reference to the Church's holy doctrine and holy practical teaching as to the sanctity of Christian marriage as a Sacrament; as to the worthy preparation necessary for it; as to the continued holy state of matrimony; and as to the blessing given to those who endeavour to regard it, and observe the regulations respecting it, as a holy sacramental state.*

Nuptial blessing.

Parents duties to children.

(*g*) Further, special, plain, and vigorous discourses and instructions upon the mutual obligations of Christian parents.

Denunciation of mixed marriages.

(*h*) Frequent denunciation of mixed marriages and of marriages in the Protestant Church, and at the office of the Registrar.

(*i*) Apposite exhortations to avoid these "sad and unholy unions," as well as to fly from the ministrations of those who are professedly in opposition to the Catholic Church.

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* "Loss of Souls." By the Right Rev. the Bishop of Salford. Part III.

Reasons for prohibition.

(*j*) Frequent reiteration in plain and simple language of the grave reasons which have urged the Church through her councils and bishops to forbid and prevent them. Impressive descriptions of the nature of the many evils of these unholy unions, viz. :—

(1) Domestic broils. Catholic's unhappiness.

(1) The invariable religious dissensions and domestic broils and disturbances, and the misery and unhappiness of mind and soul, which so often fall to the lot of the Catholic partner in a mixed marriage, where religion is derided, and its practices are denied and refused.

(2) Remorse.

(2) The remorse and despair which ensue when faith and salvation are made so difficult.

(3) Divided house.

(3) The disaster of a divided house springing from quarrels and bitter animosity in regard to the faith and education of the children.

(4) Unhappy neglect of faith and Church's laws. Death without the Sacraments.

(4) The calamity of a life spent without the observance of the Church's laws, and ended by a death without the consolations of religion.

Instructions as to their Duties to their Children.

Children a sacred trust to parents by God.

(*k*) Special, simple, and detailed instructions as to the duty of watchfulness and Christian training in regard to children from earliest

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BIB. MAJOR
TORONTO

infancy. Their responsibility for the sacred trust and delicate charge which God has committed to their keeping for His glory here, and the happiness of their immortal souls hereafter.*

Early care of children.

(*l*) The obligation of parents to teach them, as soon as possible, to lisp the holy names of Jesus and Mary; to make and love the sign of the Cross; to think of God, and to pray daily to Him.

Seeds of evil in children.

(*m*) The parents' duty of solicitude in guarding their children from evil (*ab initio*) by refraining, in their presence, from all words and actions likely to prove a source of disedification and scandal, and by carefully preventing, by anticipation, the proclivities to evil in the young children of different sexes.

Catholic School for children.

(*n*) Further, let it be inculcated upon parents that it is of the utmost importance to select the "school" for the education of their children from the number of Catholic Schools in their neighbourhood.

Discipline of Catholic School.

(*o*) Describe Catholic Schools, as in reality they are to be, as "the nurseries of the faith," where the priest reigns supreme, to teach, sanctify, and bless; where the teachers are his choice,

Religious instruction.

examples of virtue and faith; where the sacred truths of religion are heard daily expressed in words of reverence and love; where

* *Vide* Pastoral, Bishop of Salford. Part III.

Mass and Sacraments.

attendance at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is inculcated, and the Holy Sacraments are regarded as the appointed means of grace;

Catholic atmosphere. Religious emblems.

where the very atmosphere is Catholic, and where the objects which meet their gaze are emblems of their holy religion; and where the spirit and tone, which pervade the school, are in full accord with the dictates of faith, reverence, love, modesty, chastity, and filial obedience.

Evils and dangers of Protestant and Board Schools.

(*p*) In contradistinction to the duty of Catholic parents to secure a Catholic education and training for their children in a Catholic School, let it be pointed out again and again how dangerous and subversive of the faith of young children is the conduct of those who expose their Catholic children to the misfortune and calamity of a training in a Protestant or Board School.*

(*q*) It is not enough to address the people in general terms of exhortation. Time and trouble must be spent in exposing, *seriatim*, the evils and dangers of such a course. No pains mnst be spared to persuade parents to understand the reasons for this ecclesiastical prohibition, and to see the wisdom of docile compliance with the Church's laws and discipline.

Value first faith and morals.

(*r*) Let it be pointed out that Catholic parents have to estimate and value, above all things, the faith and morals of their children.

* *Vide* the Pastoral of the Bishop of Salford. Part III.

What will it profit them to gain all the fancied or real worldly advantages held out to them in non-Catholic schools, if, in the end, these children lose their immortal souls by the shipwreck of faith and morality?

Atmosphere of a Protestant School.

(*s*) Let them consider what is the nature of the atmosphere of a Protestant School, or of a Board School, which is breathed by Catholic children; and what are the pernicious effects upon their young minds; and what are the irreligious influences exercised upon them in producing indifferentism in after life.

No Priest.

(*t*) Let them remember that "no priest is seen on the threshold" of a Board School or non-Catholic School for daily prayer or religious instruction, or for priestly admonition and guidance.

No Catholic prayer. No Blessed Virgin.

No Catholic prayer is publicly said. No Catholic hymn is sung. No invocation of the Mother of God is heard. Nor is there mention of Saints or Angels with reverence and honour.

No Mass or Sacraments.

No allusion is heard to the duty of attendance at Mass or of frequenting the Sacraments.

No encouragement is given to love their faith or practise its rules. On the contrary, they find themselves in a non-Catholic atmosphere.

Teachers hostile.

The teachers, if not professedly hostile, are known to have no sympathy for their religion. Almost daily they unconsciously betray their

bias against it, to the injury of the young, sensitive, and delicate minds of the Catholic children.

Companions irreverent.

Their companions are not companions in faith; nor are they seen at Church. Scurrilous epithets, derisive allusions to their Catholic prayers, to the Holy Sacraments, and to the sacred person of the priest, often meet their ear.

Instead then of gaining daily strength in faith and in the practices of devotion, they grow weaker and fainter; courage often fails, and shame and cowardice lead to denial and apostasy.

These evils, and many more, may, with profit, be again and again described, in order that the temptation of momentary and passing advantages may be despised and conquered.

Young girls.

Another matter to be pressed upon the notice of parents, in addition to the general admonitions as to solicitude for the modest and decent behaviour of their children, has reference to the special care needed for the protection of their young girls.

Although children may have been brought up modestly and innocently in childhood, the parent's responsibility does not cease until they have passed out of their sight and care. Grave, indeed, is the duty of guarding and protecting their adult young daughters from misfortune, by admonitions, by restrictive rules as to acquaintances and early hours for retiring, and

by every other anxious and thoughtful measure known to be wise and necessary.

Caution as to acquaintances.

Above all, great is the charity displayed towards their children when they exercise a judicious, watchful, and determined supervision over them during the time of company keeping, and impress upon their minds the impropriety and danger of non-Catholic or irreligious acquaintances.

Folly of dangerous liberties.

A great duty of affection and love will be fulfilled by explaining, in explcit terms, the nature of the perils of solitary intercourse, and the folly, madness, and sin of wilful exposure to the danger of improper liberties; and by inculcating upon their daughters that, in *their* case, nothing but modesty, and the observance of every propriety, and of every necessary safeguard, will save them from inevitable catastrophe, and life-long regrets.

Matrimony—a holy state.

In order to be able to feel and speak with impressive earnestness in reference to the important subject of marriage, parents must first entertain themselves a high conception of its sanctity as a Sacrament, and as a continued holy state. Then they will be able to instruct their children that the time of company keeping is an important period, not

Preparation necessary.

only of trial and temptation, but of preparation for the reception of Holy Sacrament, and for the commencement of an important and holy state of life. What power and influence will

a good parent's words exercise over children who have from earliest years been conscientiously instructed, and religiously trained?

Docile children.

Then, indeed, may we be sanguine that the children will receive, with docility, the parental admonition to pray for light and guidance, as well as the suggestions to frequent the Sacraments, and the caution to observe becoming decorum and behaviour at all times.

Advantage of nuptial blessing.

Then, too, will be explained, with profit, the advantage of the "nuptial blessing"—the conditions of its concession, and the life-long consolation of its possession.

So far we have marked out for Titius a method of dealing with one section only of his people, viz., the confirmed "absentees" from Church and the Sacraments.

What hope for the success of Titius?

Supposing then that Titius, filled with zeal, accepts these suggestions, and declares himself ready to go forth *in nomine domini* to the back streets, alleys, and courts of his district, it may occur to a disinterested person to ask what is the nature of the reception, and what the success which may be anticipated.

The answer to this question supplies the consolation to Titius for any special labour which he may elect to undergo.

Of one thing he may rest assured—whatever may be the measure of his success in attaining the end and aim of his missionary campaign, his reception will be friendly, cordial, and reverent. In an incredible short time he will have won the admiration and gratitude of his people.

Reverent reception assured.

Every priest knows that, if he should once decide upon the necessity and upon the advisability of acting upon the suggestion offered to Titius, his reluctance or difficulty to do so may indeed arise from personal aversion to the task, but will not assuredly spring from doubt and fear as to his reverent reception, or as to his partial, if not complete, success.

This class of "absentees," the residuum of every town district, are, in the case of the clergy, easy of access, reverent of manner, full of the instincts of faith, and proud to see the kind and zealous priest in their midst.

Method of exhortation.

Let his first words of exhortation be in accents of kindness. Let them be accompanied by gentleness of manner, and let there be a plain statement of right or wrong. Let the words of the preacher breathe forth love for his Divine Master. Let there be the omission of all harsh or bitter reproaches, and then it will need no great eloquence to touch the hearts of the audience, to bring tears to their eyes, and to dispose many souls present for the immediate reception of the Sacraments.

The obstacles with which the speaker will have to contend are not those with which other street speakers and declaimers are ever confronted when addressing indiscriminate crowds and promiscuous gatherings.

No insulting remarks.

Amongst his poor Catholic flock he will not have to cope with the infidelity of the age, nor be challenged by the cold, cynic mind, nor be subjected to the sneer, laughter, and insulting interruption of ordinary street mobs, nor be abashed or disheartened by the careless, irreverent, and unheeding presence and attitude of a scoffing audience.

Respectful silence.

Reverent attention.

He will have a respectful silence. He will have kind and willing hearers, and, if aught should occur to arrest and distract him, it may be the sight of the reverence and faith so deeply rooted in the minds and hearts of these people; or, again, it may be the spontaneous emotions of pity which will rush in upon him at the sight and knowledge of the unfortunate circumstances and results of their intemperate and improvident life. There he will survey, in all its reality, the surroundings of

Deplorable surroundings.

poverty and intemperance, the sad and melancholy consequences of an indulgence which has sprung from many unfortunate causes, and which has left, as a heritage, a fatal irresolution, a weak and enervated will, which nothing but grace and the Sacraments can heal and confirm.

Want of clothes may keep them from Church;

improvidence and intemperance may be their misfortune and their sin; but if that twofold evil be checked, the light of faith will soon burst forth. It will be no paradox to say that it would soon shine strongly and brightly; nor would it need a prophet to predict that the special efforts of the pastor will be ultimately crowned with success. This means that very many souls will be rescued; dark and unhappy homes will be purified and rendered happy; and generations yet unborn will be benefitted and blessed.

The battle won if intemperance be removed.

CHAPTER XIII.

Synopsis of Replies to Question II.

Points of instruction for those who attend Church—Solicitude for this class—Exposed to the anti-Catholic spirit of the age—Pastor to be vigilant for this class—Remote and proximate duties of parents—*Remote duties :*—(1) Prayer—(2) Virtuous life—(3) Watchfulness over children—(4) Due separation of sexes—(5) Sunday's Mass—(6) Holy Sacraments—*Proximate duties :*—Selection of companions—Parental duties in preventing the mixed marriages of their children—Rules for their girls—Devotion to the B.V.M.—Future consolations—Necessary preparation for matrimony—Duties and obligations of married life—Worldliness to be discouraged—Parental care of boys and young men—Special dangers for young men—Influence of a good confessor.

Second Division of Question—No. 2.

Tribunal of penance—Inquiries as to children—As to due separation—As to other cautions—As to Catholic Schools—Non-Catholic Schools—Reception of Sacraments—Enrolment in Guilds—Mother's care of daughters.

Points of instruction for parents as to duties to their children in preventing irreligious marriages.

II. Second Question.—He is told that the people must be instructed—(1) Upon what points should he instruct parents in their duties to children with a view to prevent irreligious marriages? (2) How should he treat parents in the tribunal of penance with the same view?

Second section—Church goers.

Reply.—This question brings before us no longer the case of that section of continued and confirmed absentees from Church, but introduces us to that class or section of the Catholic community whose attendance at Church and frequentation of the Sacraments may be assured.

Amongst the people of this section, irreligious marriages may have also frequently taken place, and may, if not checked, increase and multiply.

Solicitude for this class.

Special care then is required on the part of the pastor that he may be prepared with suitable instructions for the pulpit, and with suitable directions for the Confessional.

The anti-Catholic spirit of the age.

He has ever to remember the grave dangers to which Catholics are exposed by living in an irreligious and anti-Catholic atmosphere, and by being ever in contact with principles of conduct and influences of fashion, which are utterly subversive of Catholic religious life.

Pastor to be vigilant.

He must not be lulled into a false security and apathy by the thought that those who frequent the Church are out of danger and need no special efforts in their regard.

Benefit of instructing this class.

It is precisely through special efforts made for their instruction and for *their*

edification, that defections will be prevented, and gains untold will be secured.

First Part of the Second Question.

What points of instruction should he choose when speaking in the pulpit to instruct parents in their duties to children with a view to prevent irreligious marriages?

Preliminary suggestions for the consideration of Titius in view of the contemplated instruction to parents as to their duties to their children.

In considering and in preparing for his instructions to parents on their duties to their children, the pastor may appropriately refresh his own mind with the following principles, which may, in various ways, be judiciously illustrated:—

Christian idea of maternity.

"The Christian mother must know and understand that matrimony means more than merely child-bearing; that men are not mere animals; and that the function of a mother is not ended when she has given her children birth. Children are not pet animals; they are as really human persons as their parents. They are not merely to be fed and fondled; they are to be reverenced and held in honour as becomes their dignity. As spiritual beings, as gifted with immortal souls, they are, in their personal dignity, the equals of the authors of their material being.

Children, as spiritual beings, have intelligence and wills.

"As spiritual beings, they possess intelligences which can be perfected only by a knowledge of the truth; and they possess wills, which, in order to their perfection, must be trained towards the good. From ignorance and from evil they have a right to be free; and, so far as it lies within their power to procure this freedom, is the office of good parents.

Children have a right to be free from ignorance and evil.

Children have a right to expect this freedom at the hands of parents.

"Children, then, as *intellectual and moral*, or as spiritual beings, have a right to look to their parents for that heritage of knowledge and of law which is necessary for their minds and wills.

Children have rights as social beings.

"As social beings, children have a further right. Man is a social being. The primary and fundamental human society is that of the family; and man ought to be born into the world of men *as a member of a family.*

Children have rights as moral beings.

"As moral beings, children have another right. They have a right to be sustained by the edification of good example." *

Having premised this much, we may now pass to the points of instruction suitable for parents in reference to their duties to their children.

Instructions.

Public instructions from the pulpit for the guidance of parents in this matter would not, necessarily, be confined to the immediate period preparatory to marriage.

* Christian Marriage. Rev. Fr. Humphrey, S.J.

As the observance of parental duties to children from early infancy exercises a supreme influence over their conduct in maturer age, a course of instructions to parents would naturally embrace parental duties from the beginning, and would be classed in reference to marriage as :—

I. Remote and Proximate.

I. Remote Duties of Parents.

Remote duties. The remote duties may be thus enumerated :—

(1) Duties exercised in infancy, in securing early baptism, and in placing holy thoughts and holy objects sedulously before their infant minds.

Prayer. (2) Daily morning and night prayers. The invocation of the holy names, and all that is included in an early Christian home, education, and training.

Virtuous life. (3) The difficult and responsible duty of developing the habits of a virtuous life, self-control, and obedience, and especially the practice of decency, modesty, and purity when alone and when with others.

Watchfulness of parents. (4) Parents can never be sufficiently impressed with the importance of a watchful eye upon young children. They have ever to remember that, though young, the seeds of evil are there. That the fire of concupiscence, though not

apparent, was not extinguished in baptism, but is smouldering, and only requires the breath of temptation to kindle it into flames.

As to provision for separate sleeping accommodation.

(5) Therefore, there can be no false security no careless exposure to danger; no thoughtless, unguarded word or action; nor forgetfulness of the rectitude and necessity of due separation of children of different sexes; and watchful supervision at all times.

(6) As soon as convenient, the good Christian parent will send the children to a Catholic school, placed under the care of a priest and Catholic teachers.

Attendance at Holy Mass. Frequent Sacraments.

(7) At an early moment, the children will be taught to attend Holy Mass; to know the Blessed Virgin; to be enrolled in holy Guilds; and to be habituated to the reception of the Sacraments of Confession and Communion.

II. Proximate Duties of Parents.

Proximate.

The points which more immediately affect the subject of parents' solicitude for their children's preparation for Christian marriage, and for their preservation from irreligious marriages will embrace:—

Selection of good companions.

1. Anxious watchfulness as to the religious character and behaviour of the companions and associates of their children.

It is often difficult to effect the dissolution of an already formed friendship, which might easily have been earlier prevented or nipped in the bud. Religious-minded parents will easily understand their duty on this score.

2. The selection of acquaintances is most serious. Young people not having had experience require the knowledge and guidance of elders.

3. The watchfulness of parents in reference to the selection of acquaintances in the case of their children has a distinct reference to their preservation from the evils of mixed and irreligious marriages.

The prohibitions—divine and ecclesiastical—directed against mixed marriages to be explained.

It is of great moment that parents themselves should be educated upon the subject of the Church's teaching in reference to mixed marriages—their condemnation and unhappy consequences.

The evil results arising from these unions are so great and so invariable that no pains must be spared by the pastor to inculcate, in season and out of season, the doctrine of the Church upon this subject, and to describe, in all their vivid reality, the disastrous consequences of these marriages.

One cause of frequency of mixed marriages.

Inadequate instruction.

"One main cause of the frequency of these unlawful alliances," writes the Bishop of Birmingham, "will be found in the inadequate instruction which the faithful receive on the subject, whether at the time of cate-

chising or in the discourses from the pulpit; and such deficiency of instruction partly arises from an apprehension of wounding those who have already contracted mixed marriages. No doubt it is a subject that demands the use of prudent, grave, and measured language; yet, where the salvation of souls is at stake, the Church knows neither reticence nor false delicacy. If youths are taught the law in their catechism, they will be prepared to hear it enlarged on from the pulpit. If the prohibition and its causes are made known to them before their passionate fancy gains its development, they will have the Catholic sense and instinct within them to guard and restrain themselves before they get entangled in engagements. If parents are taught to reflect on the perils that are intrinsic to these marriages; on the practical disadvantages in a religious sense that attend even the best of them; and the strong disapproval of the Church in reference to them, they will be more careful in keeping their children from the immediate occasion of them, and will be less disposed to encourage them."

Instruction for youth most desirable.

Instruction necessary for parents.

"The prevalence of mixed marriages," writes another Right Rev. Prelate, "is a terrible blot upon the character of our Catholic community. It is sad to think with what facility Catholic parents consent to such irreligious connections; with how little caution they expose their

The prevalence of mixed marriages a blot.

young people to social intercourse, where passionate fancy and the thoughtlessness of youth are certain to entail the danger of mischievous alliances. It is, in the main, the fault of the parents more than the children, who hear so little warning against mixed marriages; so little denunciation and deprecation of their dangers and miseries. If young people did hear from the clergy and from parents as often and as explicitly as they ought, the sense and doctrine of the Church concerning such marriages, they would be a far rarer calamity than they are. The generosity itself of the young, would revolt from such unions if they saw them in the true light—as a danger and a disgrace. Yes, a disgrace; not, perhaps, always in the eye of the world, but always in the eye of the Church. How are they to be interpreted? On one side there is the Church teaching that matrimony is a Sacrament; that the married life has its own great duties, its own difficulties, for which special graces from God are necessary, and which are provided by Him; that the state is to be entered upon thoughtfully and solemnly, with careful preparation of mind and heart; that spouses are to be a mutual help and encouragement in the grand end of all human life—the life for God and the next world. This is on one side; and on the other, what? A mere fanciful or passionate attachment, with little enough of worth

Remissness of clergy in not giving more frequent instructions on this subject.

All this incompatible with Catholic belief.

A fanciful attachment.

about it, even when pure with the utmost natural purity it can have; a mere passionate attachment, overlooking, or at least most certainly undervaluing, the great considerations we have just stated. Is not this a disgrace? Or, if the motive to a mixed marriage be an advantageous alliance in respect of money prospects, is it not even more disgraceful to soil a sacred thing with the sordid calculations of a commercial bargain? Or, if the mixed marriage be coveted, because one of the parties possesses some little higher worldly standing of fashion, or connection, or style, why, is not the thing still more contemptibly disgraceful, at least for the Catholic, with his or her belief about the one Church, the holiness of Sacraments, the preciousness of God's grace, and the true end of life?" *

Motives are either money or higher worldly position.

The pastor must not, therefore, deem it sufficient merely to state the fact of the ecclesiastical prohibition, nor merely to state the fact of the unsatisfactory results arising from mixed marriages. The subject must, necessarily, be entered into fully and frequently; and each point must be brought out with telling effect, until the whole of the congregation under his charge has been impressed, and has been left no excuse for ignorance on this vital subject. It may be some encouragement for pastors to accept this suggestion, when it is known that in certain missions

People to be more frequently and more fully instructed.

The effect of instruction as witnessed in the diocese of Birmingham.

* Pastoral Instruction, by the Right Rev. the Bishop of Birmingham, Synod IV., 1869.

of the Birmingham diocese, and elsewhere, an Episcopal Instruction of the Right Rev. Dr. Ullathorne, the learned and much revered Bishop of Birmingham, written in forcible language upon this subject, has now, for some years past, been publicly read in the Churches several times a year with such good effect that in those missions dispensations for mixed marriages are never required. The following words of the Right Rev. the Bishop of Birmingham, recently received, will be sufficient to justify this digression :—

Extract from a letter of the Right Rev. the Bishop of Birmingham.

(Extract from a letter of the Bishop of Birmingham, St. Mary's College, Oscott, Birmingham, February 19th, 1887.)

. . . . "In some missions of this diocese where it (the above-mentioned Episcopal Instruction) is read to the congregation several times a year, I have scarcely ever an application for a dispensation in a mixed marriage."

✠ W. B. ULLATHORNE.

(N.B.—This Episcopal Instruction will be found printed *in extenso* in the third part of this volume.)

From these words the pastor will conclude that too much importance cannot be attached to public instruction to parents from the pulpit on the subject of mixed marriages.

Points for discourse.

The points to be found indicated in the Bishop's instruction may be thus enumerated :—

Divine Prohibition of mixed marriages dating from the beginning. *Gen.* vi.

(*a*) The prohibition of mixed marriages is a divine prohibition, and dates from the beginning. (See *Gen.* vi. chap.)

Prohibition repeated in the new law. *St. Paul.*

(*b*) The prohibition of mixed marriages is repeated in the New Testament. (*St. Paul.*)

Prohibition repeated in the continuous legislation of the Church.

(*c*) The prohibition of mixed marriages is found repeated in the continuous ecclesiastical legislation of the Church, and especially since the 16th century.

(N.B.—The history of this prohibitive legislation is traced in the Chapter on Mixed Marriages, Part I.)

Prohibition justified by reason and experience.

(*d*) Reason itself recognises *a priori* the evils of mixed marriages. Experience, daily and hourly, reveals to the pastor the misery and disasters of mixed marriages.

The evils of mixed marriages should be described *seriatim*, as enumerated in Chapter viii., Part I.

(*a*) Profanation of a Sacrament.

(*a*) The profanation of the Sacrament of Matrimony — Its frequent doubtful validity—The unhappy position of the Catholic party —The gulf of separation in spiritual and religious matters—The consequent economies, reserves, and jealousies.

(*b*) The dangers to faith—The temptation to yield to sloth and neglect—The difficulties of a constant struggle to keep faithful to the Church.

(*c*) The promises as to the baptism of the children often broken—The education of the children most unsatisfactory and injurious to faith.

(*d*) A divided house—The destruction of peace and religious harmony.

Cautious treatment of this subject.

In approaching the consideration of this subject, it may frequently happen that prudence will render necessary a cautious treatment of this subject, and a thoughtful choice of language, as well as a careful selection of words.

Still, no false delicacy can be allowed for a moment to dissuade or prevent a pastor fulfilling his duty on this most important subject.

He must, however, guard his rhetoric; restrain his feelings; refrain from epithets; and, above all, avoid "the bitter zeal," which wounds unto death. Rather let the pastor, whilst fully and clearly exposing the evils and disastrous results of mixed marriages, and whilst declaring the inflexible condemnation, divine and ecclesiastical, of these unholy unions, and whilst emphatically proclaiming their inevitable results, at the same time display kindness of heart, tenderness for the erring, gentleness of manner, the absence of animus, the avoidance of personalities; in a word, let the pastor speak as the minister of God, as representing Christ Himself, as a man of God, filled with zeal for souls, and burning with the love of God, then, so far from scandal being given, or taken by his hearers, it will be felt and understood that a duty has been fulfilled on the part of the preacher, and that a reciprocal duty will have to be discharged on the part of the hearers.

Parents will do well to inculcate sedulously upon their children the duty of docility in recognising and acknowledging, as first principles of conduct, the obligation of listening to parental admonitions and guidance.

Children thus instructed and trained will have no hesitation in admitting the following points in regard to their Parents:—

1. The right of parents to disapprove of, and prevent all intercourse likely to terminate in a mixed marriage. Their experience, and ability to understand and explain the grave reasons for the Church's prohibitions.

2. The right and duty of parents to ascertain and estimate the character and dispositions of their companions and suitors, and the kind of compatibility of natural temperament likely to exist in their regard. To scan narrowly the conduct and principles of those with whom their children may soon contract an union for life.

3. The right and duty of parents to prevent, by watchful care and admonition, the dangers of violations of God's laws, so imminent at a time of youthful intercourse, and yet so often disastrous.

N.B.—Special precautions will naturally occur to the mind as necessarily incumbent upon parents in the case of their young daughters.

4. They must not only warn and guard them against the advances of undesirable persons, but they must, in very explicit terms, point out to them that now has arrived the time for the care and preservation of that jewel of innocence, that lily of chastity, which has been treasured so long, and which may now so easily be destroyed and lost. They must be warned that only efficacious means, resolutely taken, can give security to the tenure of that precious gift. These means are :—

(*a*) Invariable modesty of demeanour; propriety of behaviour; cautious reserve in all intercourse; and determined abstention from dangerous improprieties.

(*b*) Very important will be a firm resolution to shrink from, and even fly from, the first intimation of any sinful overture, and to value and maintain self-respect on all occasions.

Never to be alone.

(*c*) Further than this, it must be ever impressed upon young Catholic girls that neither the experience of others nor the conventionalities of society will sanction much intercourse without witnesses or hearers, nor loitering in unfrequented places.

(*d*) Let it be well understood that a girl's good name is her fortune, and that if the breath of suspicion be allowed to blight it or dim its lustre, the malevolent tongues of the world will take full license to discharge their venemous aspersions, and, alas! too often with

damning effect. Honesty, uprightness, and modesty are ever a girl's best policy.

Devotion to B.V.M.

(*e*) For this purpose was she taken as a child to the feet of the Blessed Virgin—the model and pattern of Christian modesty; for this purpose was she trained to wear her emblems, and daily seek her protection, in order that she might be enabled to resist every insidious and paralysing temptation against the angelical virtue of holy purity.

Consolations.

(*f*) Especially should a Christian parent point out, in all admonitions and cautions against levity, and thoughtless, as well as dangerous compliances, that a life-time of consolation will reward those who come to the altar innocent, without having anticipated the rights of marriage.

6. Sedulously must Catholic parents keep before the minds of their children in all their conversation, preparation, and arrangements for their marriage, the Church's teaching as to the sanctity of marriage, and the subsequent sacramental holy state of marriage; both of which are violated by mixed and irreligious marriages.

7. To this end prayers will be made and sought for at the hands of others.

8. The holy Sacraments of Penance and Communion will be approached as a preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage now in view.

9. The duties and obligations of the future state will be taught and apprehended, and a serious, intelligent, and conscientious estimate of the gravity of the step to be taken will be formed.

Discourage worldliness.

10. Whilst Christian parents may fitly and legitimately show their love for their children, and their wish to honour and provide for them by presents, dress, furniture, and other methods of testifying their affection in accordance with their position and station of life, nevertheless, there must be a Christian reasonable moderation in all the external display of joy and gladness. All must be subordinated to the teaching and instincts of faith. Joy and gladness are legitimate, but mere worldliness, sheer extravagance, vain display, empty fashions, the parade and pomp of wealth and pride, simply and solely to cater to the spirit of the world, will not be in harmony with that holy Sacrament, nor a good augury for the happiness of that holy state.

11. A matter of importance, which will not fail to have the reverent observance of good Catholic parents, is the ecclesiastical legislation of the Church in reference to the "forbidden times," and in reference to the prohibited degrees of "relationship," as well as in reference to other "impediments," rendering the contract of marriage either unlawful or invalid.

The forbidden times are known to all Catholics to be:—

(1) The days of Advent, and until after the Epiphany.

(2) The days of Lent, from Ash-Wednesday until Low Sunday, inclusive.

The other impediments will be found briefly enumerated in a separate chapter, Part III.

Parents' Care of their Boys and Young Men.

With regard to the parental care required for boys, special instructions are necessary.

Girls are, for the most part, domesticated and at home, under the influence of the mother, and amenable to her direction.

Boys, youths, and men, on the other hand, are unavoidably absent from home. Business and necessity call them away, and withdraw them from home influences.

What good parents do not dread the day which is to remove their boy from their continued supervision, and which is to see him emancipated from discipline, and go forth to encounter the difficulties, trials, and temptations of life?

The dangers of our time for young men are:—

Temptations. (1) The evil companions with whom they may be brought into contact. (2) The customs and habits of drinking and smoking, which seem now to be regarded as necessary accomplishments for all

young men entering upon life. (3) The sad necessity which obliges visits to public-houses for the purposes of business, bargains, sales, and amusements. (4) The universal custom of associating drinking with good fellowship, social gatherings, and joyful events. (5) The further dangers of gambling and betting, &c.

What wonder that the tears steal down the mother's cheek, when she bids adieu, at this crisis, to her boy, on the first morning of his departure for his new life. He will return in the evening, it is true. He will still live with her, in a limited sense, day-by-day. But their relations will now be altered. The innocence and simplicity of the past will now be sorely tried. The boyish confidence, the open candid disclosure of conversations, actions, acquaintances, follies, and faults, must now be no longer expected. Reserve and concealment—even dissembling may supervene.

The boy passes out of the mother's sphere, from her watchful supervision and guardianship, into the position of comparative independence and self reliance. Conscience must now, more than ever, be his mentor. The Confessor, henceforth, must be relied upon for much of his future guidance and direction along the stony path of virtue and self denial.

Who then shall over estimate the anxiety and responsibility of good parents who have the care of these young men?

As they advance in years passions grow stronger, the imagination becomes excited, heart and affections

get on fire, the whole soul becomes transported, and a brilliant chain of illusions surround them.

Parents, who have faithfully discharged their duty to their boys from early infancy, will find that their influence will still remain, although their method of exerting it will necessarily be modified. A mother's counsel gently and anxiously given, a father's advice judiciously timed, will have greater effect than might seem to be produced at the moment.

For the rest, recourse must be had to prayer, and confidence must be placed in the wise Confessor, who will be selected to guide and direct him through the difficult trials and temptations of his life. (See replies to Question IV., No. 2, in which the subject is treated with special reference to the Confessor, and in which suggestions are offered for direction and guidance.)

The attention of parents may be here called to the following beautiful spiritual counsel offered by a Spanish writer to young men and others, for the purpose of securing holy marriages. At the same time it will be found to contain suitable admonitions and warnings against the dangers of irreligious marriages.

Spiritual Advice to Young Men. Admonitions and Warnings against Irreligious Marriages.

(Translated from the Spanish.)

Prayer for direction.

"If, after due diligence and consideration, you find that God's will is that you should marry, begin to pray for grace that you may

make no mistake in the choice of a companion, because it is not enough to pray to God in order to know what state of life you should choose. It may, indeed, be God's will that you should marry; but it may not be God's will that you should marry such or such a person rather than another. Therefore, as you have taken counsel with God about marriage, consult Him also about the choice of the person with whom to get married.

"As peace and concord between married persons is a most important thing, since upon that depends the happiness of conjugal life, consider that nothing will better conduce to this result than that there should be between young people equality of age, class, and condition, and that the young person sought for should be chaste, prudent, docile, determined to do her duty, God-fearing, charitable, and virtuous. These, and such like qualities, must be looked for in the person whom a youth wishes to marry, and not *merely and solely* beauty, riches, and nobility, or, what is worse, the satisfaction of an unruly passion.

Selection.

"But, in order to meet with such a person, it will be well, first of all, to lay aside all earthly considerations, and to throw one's self on God's goodness, with full confidence in Him, for Holy Scripture says:—"The father will give the dowry, but God will give the good wife."—*Prov.* xix. 14.

God's will to be sought.

"No other marriage will be happy except that which the Lord unites. The Sacrament will produce its effect by granting the grace of love and concord to the married parties. It will impart strength to them in order that they may bear, with patience, the penalties, labours, and troubles, which this state brings with it. It will infuse into them the knowledge and prudence required to instruct and direct the children with which God will bless them.

"On the contrary, those persons whose union God does not bless, and whose marriage is made *merely and solely* for the sake of money, beauty, or passion; who, instead of preparing to receive the holy Sacrament of Marriage with proper dispositions, dare to profane it by long previous sinful intercourse together, and by criminal indulgence in improper liberties, which are solicited and allowed under the pretext of a promise of marriage, cannot reasonably expect to enjoy the happiness which is the portion of those who have had an exalted idea of the sanctity of marriage, and who have prepared accordingly.

"In thus endeavouring to compass their wicked purpose, what a source of misfortune they prepare for themselves; what discords and quarrels they ensure.

"Those who are impressed with the importance of a due and worthy preparation for marriage, will not fail to try to win the help of God and of Our Blessed Lady. They will abstain from all previous sinful

intercourse. Before contracting marriage, they will spend a few days in the spiritual exercises of a retreat, and make a general confession. The day of marriage will thus be truly a great and happy day—since they will sanctify it with three Sacraments. They will have been purified by the Sacrament of Penance; they will have been sanctified by the Sacrament of Marriage; and they will have been visited by Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. They will be reminded of the presence of Jesus Christ at the marriage feast of Cana, in Galilee. At their banquet and marriage feast, no improper or unchaste language, nor words of double meaning will be heard; and, whilst every innocent and legitimate signs of festivity, enjoyment, recreation, and honest pleasure may be permitted, nevertheless, everything unbecoming will be carefully discarded. The newly-married couple will follow the example of Sarah and Tobias, and the Angel Raphael will send Asmodius away.

"On the other hand, marriages which have been preceded by countless sins, and which are accompanied by many more on the marriage day, cannot reasonably be expected to bring glory to God, nor any blessing to the married parties until there be a sincere repentance and amendment of life. The blessings which belong to the Sacrament of Marriage, and the sacramental graces which are intended to be a source of help and support to the married parties, are not, indeed, absolutely withheld, but, until they repent and turn to

God, they cannot be obtained. What can be expected of such an union without sincere repentance?

Bitter fruits of unholy unions.

"What wonder if the fruits of such unholy unions should prove to be wild and bitter. Then may arise cases of unfaithfulness, cases of divorce, and quarrels and scandals, such as we witness, to our grief, every day, to the disgrace of religion, and to the injury of society."

Second Division of Question No. 2.

How should Titius treat parents in the Confessional with the view of directing them in reference to their children and irreligious marriages?

Prudence.

In the sacred tribunal of Penance parents may be properly and advantageously addressed, exhorted, and instructed on this subject. The Confessor will, according to circumstances, and according to his judgment, make such inquiries as may lead him to the requisite knowledge as to the necessity and advisability of special instructions and admonitions.

He will judiciously inquire:—

Nature of the inquiries to be made.

1. As to the number and ages of the children.

2. As to the parent's solicitude shown in all the arrangements for sleeping accommodation, and in the due separation of the sexes.

3. As to the care observed in keeping young children out of the sight and hearing of what may prove injurious to innocence.

Children observant.

4. He will point out the delusion of supposing young children to be unobservant, and will name the consequent cautions to be observed.

Modesty.

5. He may inquire as to the sedulous supervision of children, young and old, in the observance of decent and modest behaviour, and in the avoidance of sinful liberties.

Piety.

6. As to the care taken in imparting, personally, religious instruction, and knowledge of prayers, and of piety.

Schools.

7. As to the Christian education given in Catholic schools.

8. If any children are being educated at objectionable schools, he will make a fervent exhortation to withdraw those children, and will give a short enumeration of the dangers to faith and morality to which Catholic children are thus exposed.

Dangers.

9. If exhortation be fruitless, and circumstances render the withdrawal gravely difficult, then he will explain the mind and admonitions of the Church, and the parental responsibility incurred.

10. The suggestions to be made in this case are important.

Parents, and especially mothers, are to be advised to use every means to prevent, or at least counteract, all the adverse influences of Board schools and non-Catholic schools.

11. To make inquiries, and to ascertain, as far as possible, the nature of the actual dangers of the particular school attended by their children, and to strive to minimise the danger by personal instructions and exceptional care in securing their attendance at Church and Holy Mass; and to endeavour, as far as may be in their power, to strengthen their faith in such a manner that it may have ascendency over heart, mind, and affections.

12. He will point out the special necessity of regular attendance at the Sacraments for such unfortunate children.

Guilds. 13. He will advise the enrolment of their children in Guilds and Confraternities, and will point out the advantages to be derived from these religious societies, viz., closer union with good Catholic companions, the priest, and the Church, and encouragement in the practice of virtue, &c.

14. He will inqurire as to their watchfulness over the older boys and girls in all matters of faith and practice.

Daughters. 15. If a mother, he will inquire as to the care and solicitude shown in the case of her daughters, and as to the efforts made to guard against, and render impossible, improper liberties at the time of company

keeping, as well as in all intercourse with those of the opposite sex.

A very important subject for direction and admonition will arise in cases where parents refer to their children's engagement to be married, or to their company keeping, whether in the preliminary or more advanced stage.

Special instruction on this subject will be found, drawn out at length, in the reply given to the next question.

The Confessor will endeavour to ascertain whether any probability exists of a violation of ecclesiastical law as to the forbidden degrees of relationship, or as to the celebration of a mixed marriage.

In case he should discover a contemplated course of conduct in opposition to the wise regulations of the Church, he will endeavour, by judicious words, to secure obedience and submission.

CHAPTER XIV.

Synopsis of Replies to Question III.

I. Points of instruction—Caution as to subject matter—Subjects to be avoided—First point, sanctity of marriage; second point, worthy preparation—Reception—Duties and obligations—Denounce worldliness. 1. Point out the sacred character of Christian marriage. 2. Contrast and compare marriage in the new dispensation with marriage in the old law. 3. Graces and nuptial blessing. 4. Marriage a holy state. 5. Indissoluble union of Christian marriage. 6. Description of the responsibility of the married state. Remote preparation for marriage—(1) Necessity of prayer—(2) Careful selection of partner—(3) Consult parents—(4) Consult confessors—(5) Observance of modesty—(6) Recourse to sacraments—Company keeping—A time of trial—Beware of hasty promises—Formal engagement—Legal and ecclesiastical—Church recognises formal engagement—Ecclesiastical penalties for breach of engagement—Conditions required for sponsalia—Engagement strictly binding—Caution necessary in making an engagement—Sins which may be committed—Passion of love and concupiscence—Dangers—Love of dress a danger—Evils of flirtation—Conventional rules of society—Danger of visiting places alone—Children of Mary—Their emblems—Little office—Unequal matches—Company keeping—Young men—Proximate preparation for marriage—Duties and responsibilities of married state—Duties of husband and wife—The husband, the head. II. Mutual vows of fidelity—Reciprocal duties—Conjugal fidelity—Includes mutual reverence—Circumspection in conduct with others, married and unmarried—Purity of conscience by previous confession—Purity of intention—First end of marriage—Bearing and training of children for God—Models of saintly mothers of past ages—Second end of marriage—Mutual love and society—

Mutual patience and forbearance—Mutual failings part of the accepted burden—Widespread ignorance of these obligations—Frequent proofs of this ignorance—Previous instruction upon these points necessary—Rules for the guidance of the wife—Their observance her best interest—Instruction upon the husband's responsibilities—His right to rule—His duty to remember the trust that has been placed in him by the wife—A bad husband faithless to his pledge—Intemperance the source of untold evils—Husband to love his home in preference to the public house—Husband to provide for wife and children—Husband's neglect of religious duties—Third end of marriage—A remedy for temptation—Advantage of nuptial blessing—Absolute necessity for the observance of mutual duties—Divorce impossible—Therefore earnest prayer—Confession and communion—Life-long consolation of a good preparation—Happiness of a holy marriage—Explanation of marriage ceremony—Words of promise—The ring—Vows—Nuptial mass—Explanation of nuptial blessing—Banns—Marriage ceremony.

WHAT points of instruction should he choose when speaking in the pulpit?

1. On the subject of Christian marriage.

2. As to remote preparation for marriage, *e.g.*, company keeping.

3. As to the immediate preparation for marriage.

In speaking in the pulpit upon the great subject of Christian marriage, it is obvious to all that whilst it is most necessary to give instructions with a view to impress the minds of a promiscuous congregation with its high and sacred character, nevertheless it is a subject upon which much judgment, tact, adroitness,

Caution needed.

prudence, and delicacy are needed, not only as to the selection of the subject matter, but also as to the words and phrases employed.

It may be on this account that this question is asked. We may be required to indicate what points are suitable and what subjects are not to be selected.

Subjects to be avoided.

No allusion, it need scarcely be observed, will be necessary or advisable in reference to that marriage debt, and marriage bed, around which the veil of religion has been drawn.

No mention will be made of those special impediments and other matters, which are of an exceptional and of a delicate nature, and of which the theologian and director may claim exclusive consideration and treatment.

Having premised this much, we may indicate the points of instruction, always remembering that in addressing mixed congregations it becomes an imperative necessity to study how to couch the language, and present the ideas in such a way that the innocent may not be disturbed, nor the weak or prurient find an occasion of sin.

The points of instruction arrange themselves under four heads, and embrace:—

1. The sanctity of marriage as a Sacrament and a holy sacramental state.

2. The nature of the preparation for the worthy

reception of the Sacrament, including the preliminary company keeping.

3. The duties and obligations of the married state.

4. The devout reception of the Sacrament of Marriage—the sacramental graces and nuptial blessing.

Worldliness. In speaking publicly of matrimony, a good opportunity is afforded of declaiming against that purely worldly and sensual view of marriage which so often prevails, and also against that frivolous vanity seeking, and luxurious fashion, which domineers society so much, and which is subversive of the true conception of Christian marriage.

At the same time the opportunity will suggest by way of contrast an instruction upon the elevation of marriage by divine institution to the rank of a Sacrament, having graces, spiritual aids, and special blessings annexed.

The following points of instruction upon the "Sacrament of Matrimony" are suggested:—

1. The supernatural, holy, and sacramental character of Christian marriage in the new dispensation of the Catholic Church, as contrasted and compared with the former mere natural contract of marriage, originally instituted in the old law.

2. The graces and nuptial blessing annexed to the worthy reception of this Sacrament.

3. The continuation of the married state a continued holy sacramental state—*Matrimonium in facto.*

4. The unity and indissoluble union of Christian marriage clearly taught in Holy Scripture, and illustrated by the figure of the mystic union of Christ with His Church.

Divorce. The teaching of the Church upon the indissoluble union of Christian marriage may be considered in contrast with the false and mischievous, doctrines which prevail outside the Catholic Church, as to the possibility and lawfulness of dissolving the matrimonial union for grave causes, and under grave circumstances.

This dissolution of the marriage tie the pastor will declare to be impossible.

The pastor will regard his instruction on this subject as important and necessary. He will observe in this country:—

1. The prevalence of erroneous opinions and views as to the character of Christian marriage.

2. The unhappy civil and legal sanctions which permit divorce.

3. The sad results as seen in the frequency with which appeals are made by married persons for divorce and release from the obligations of their state.

4. The sad results to public morality arising from

the publicity, sad revelations, and scandal which invariably accompany these cases of divorce.

With these evils before his mind the pastor will judiciously frame an instruction for his people, which will place before them the true doctrine of the Church on the subject of divorce.

The points for this instruction will be found in Chapter VI., Part I.

The instruction upon the subject of divorce may be summed up under the following heads:—

Impossibility. 1. The absolute impossibility of what is known and sanctioned by the State as divorce.

Criminal results. 2. The criminal results of any such attempted violation of the divine and ecclesiastical law.

Delusion of the divorced. 3. The vain pretence and delusion of those who, availing themselves of the opportunities and facilities afforded by the law of divorce, essay, on various pretexts to dissolve the matrimonial bond and contract new alliances, which have the name of marriage, but in reality are nothing more than licensed concubinages.

4. The description in general terms of the duties, obligations, and responsibilities of the married state.

5. The need of grace and of sacramental helps to enable the contracting parties to be faithful to each other until death, and to be to each other a mutual help in the way to heaven.

6. The due observance of all ecclesiastical laws and prohibitions in reference to the time and manner of contracting marriages, and in reference to persons connected by affinity or relationship, and also in reference to marriages invalidated by certain ecclesiastical impediments.

II.—WORTHY PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE.

Remote Preparation—Company Keeping.

Public instruction as to the worthy preparations for marriage will embrace :—

The remote preparation—Company keeping.

The proximate preparation—The considerations more immediately connected with the reception of the Sacrament.

The *remote* preparation will embrace such points as :—

1. The necessity of prayer for light and guidance.

2. Careful selection of a partner of the same religion, of good character, and with recognised compatibility of disposition and temperament.

3. The wisdom of consulting parents, and of seeking their approbation and advice.

4. The benefit of consulting confessors and spiritual directors.

5. The cautious observance of modesty and propriety of behaviour in all intercourse. If possible, to be seldom alone, and never out of the sight or hearing of others.

6. Frequent recourse to the Sacraments for spiritual guidance, and for special grace to overcome temptations.

I. Company Keeping.

The following lengthy suggestions upon this important subject are offered for consideration. The selection of points for public or private instruction must be left, necessarily, to the guidance and judgment of the preacher and spiritual director.

Meaning. By company keeping is meant that preparatory and tentative intercourse which generally takes place between persons previous to an engagement, or after an engagement, to be married.

We are asked to point out the subject-matter suitable for instruction in reference to this time and to these persons.

Time of trial. Every parent will know that this period of courting, or company keeping, is a time of great temptation and trial, and that young and inexperienced persons require their advice and guidance.

Parents to be consulted. Good children will not make any acquaintances with a view to company keeping, without seeking the advice and consent of parents or guardians. An honourably-minded young man will ask

permission from the parents or guardians of the girl, to whom he desires to pay his addresses as suitor for her hand.

Beware of hasty promises.

The first matter of importance which suggests itself for admonition is the caution to be observed by all young persons who are keeping company, not to make hasty promises of marriage, and not to give any formal pledge of engagement, much less to commit themselves in foolish and incautious correspondence. (*Litera scripta manet.*)

The time of company keeping is a time for learning the dispositions and compatibility of temper which may exist, and for forming a judgment as to the probabilities of the persons being able to unite in making a happy future.

When the decision is arrived at, and the consent of parents is obtained, then what is called an "engagement" may take place in reference to future marriage.

Formal engagement.

This "engagement" is a serious matter, and if rashly, imprudently, or secretly made, may frequently be deeply regretted; and yet, if broken, may entail exposure, humiliation, and severe pecuniary loss.

Legal and ecclesiastical.

It is necessary to distinguish the legal engagement from the ecclesiastical engagement or espousals (sponsalia), as they are called by theologians.

The law will give redress and heavy pecuniary damages, where the persons can afford, in reparation for "breach of promise" of marriage, or for the violation of an engagement to marry, when the promise or engagement can be satisfactorily proved, and when the "breach of promise" or refusal to marry cannot be justified.

The Church recognises the solemn and formal engagement or promise to marry (*sponsalia*), and attaches her sanctions and penalties to the observance or violation of the engagement. Such a promise or engagement not only cannot be broken without injustice and sin, except for a grave cause, or by mutual consent; but as long as that promise and engagement remain unrescinded, neither party may enter upon another engagement to marry. Neither party can lawfully marry another person, and both are absolutely forbidden by the Church to contract marriage with blood relations of the other side in the first degree. If, then, a man were to violate his engagement to marry a young woman, without sufficient justifying cause, he would not only be forbidden to marry another person, but he would be interdicted by a special invalidating impediment from any engagement to marry the mother, sister, or child of the injured person.

This diriment impediment in the first degree of consanguinity affects the parties although the sponsalia were lawfully rescinded.

As the promise to marry is attended with serious consequences, all young persons would do well to make themselves acquainted with the nature and conditions of the formal engagement which bind them to fidelity.

It must be borne in mind that the legal requirements for a verdict in favour of a supposed promise of marriage are considerably less numerous and less grave than the conditions exacted by the Church.

Conditions of sponsalia.

In order that the engagement be such as to obtain the recognition and sanction of the Church, and such as will render the violation of it subject to ecclesiastical penalties, the following conditions must be found fulfilled:—

1. The promise to marry must be sincere, and not merely pretended.

2. The promise must be mutual, and must be made and accepted by both parties.

3. It must be made with full deliberation and consent.

4. Both parties must be capable of marriage either at the time of the promise or at some future specified time.

N.B.—The Church holds that the violation of sponsalia *ficte* contracted, incurs the same canonical penalties as the violation of sponsalia *vera*.

It is immaterial whether the engagement be made publicly or secretly; whether in the presence of witnesses or alone; whether capable of legal proof or whether unsubstantiated by evidence.

Engagement binding.

If all the conditions laid down by the Church are fulfilled, then the promise or engagement is sacred and binding before God and the Church. The wilful and unjustifiable violation of the engagement, or infidelity to the promise made, would involve sin and the obligation of reparation, even though, in the case of a denial, and in the absence of evidence, the Ecclesiastical Court could not compel the espoused under censures to marry, and even though in a court of justice legal evidence were wanting to justify a verdict for damages.

Caution.

It will serve still more to impress upon persons keeping company the necessity of caution in entering into a formal engagement to marry, if it be pointed out that grave sin may be committed, both in making this formal promise of marriage injudiciously, as well as by the subsequent commission of infidelities in reference to it.

Possible sins.

It may, under certain circumstances, be a serious error and a grave sin to make such formal promise, *sponsalia*, without reference to parents for advice and sanction.

2. It may be a serious injustice, and a grave sin, to make such an engagement under circumstances when there is danger of proving false to the innocent and unsuspecting party by not fulfilling the promise; or, on the other hand, where there may be danger of causing the innocent party great and serious injury, sorrow, or misfortune by contracting the marriage.

Breach of promise.

3. It will always be a great crime to break, without a just cause a former pledge of future marriage (*sponsalia*). Such violation of faith will entail the obligation of reparation and compensation.

4. It will always be a grave matter, and possibly a great cause of sin, to prolong, unnecessarily, the time of company keeping, especially where there is constant pressing danger of offending God, so as to be a continued proximate occasion of sin.

II. Informal Company Keeping.

Informal company keeping.

Having premised this much upon company keeping in general, and having considered that phase of company keeping, which means ultimate marriage, we may now draw attention to another phase of courting, or company keeping, which does not necessarily mean a promise of marriage, or a present intention of future marriage.

The class of persons who pass through a period of informal company keeping is numerous, and includes the young boy or girl, from fifteen or sixteen, to the adults of twenty to thirty.

Company keeping, however serious in its consequences, is often practically considered, in its nature and progress, to be the halycon time of life, and is frequently referred to, both by the parties concerned, and by their worldly friends, as a matter for supreme

levity. The time of youth is the time of vigour, fire, enthusiasm, poetry, inexperience, boisterous mirth, animal spirits, pleasure, and indulgence.

Passions. The time of company keeping, therefore, for young people is, necessarily, a time of imminent danger. No passion is so treacherous, so insidious, so powerful, so violent, and so ungovernable, if not kept under due restraint, as that of love and concupiscence, which two persons, under such circumstances, do their utmost to excite and fan into wild lurid flames.

Mother. If then, no watchful mother be at hand to guard her child, to hover round and protect her, hedge her in with fences, restrictions, admonitions, and endless wise precautions, who shall wonder at the follies and catastrophes which form the landmarks of the history of company keeping.

Parents will do well to understand their obligations towards their children at this time of company keeping.

Unchastity in a woman. With advantage may they be instructed as to the special reasons which make unchastity in a woman so deserving of the reprobation with which it is commonly visited. They should be taught that, "as a moral virtue, chastity is the same in either sex; but, as a social virtue, it belongs especially to the woman. Chastity is to her what truth and honesty, as social virtues, are to the man. When we speak of female honour we mean chastity; the honour of a man is his truth and trustworthiness. For a man

to be dishonest is a social crime, as it is a social crime for a woman to be unchaste. The reason underlying all this is to be found in the grave evil inflicted upon society by the uncertainty of parentage, caused by the infidelity of the woman if in married life, and by the loss of honourable parentage and parental protection for the children in unmarried life." *

The reason for the severity of society.

Parents need to be reminded that one dangerous rock upon which so many split is the love of dress, ornaments, and finery, and the ambition to appear. If it be the girl, she must be "the cynosure of neighbouring eyes." If it be the young man, he must pose as the well-known "masher," "lady-killer," or "vanquisher of hearts."

Evils of flirtation.

Flirtation, coquetry, and the vanity of claiming many admirers, will often prove a fatal source of misfortune.

There is ever a latent desire to display the power of allurement and conquest. A curiosity to explore the treacherous and forbidden ground of dangerous haunts; an instinctive wish to dart furtive glances at forbidden fruit—not to touch, perhaps, but to admire.

1. Parents will be reminded of their duties and responsibilities in reference to this insidious temptation of overweening vanity which seeks to please at all costs, and in disregard of all dangers. They must under-

* Christian Marriage. Rev. Fr. Humphry, S.J.

stand how much the danger is to be dreaded, and how carefully it must be guarded against.

2. Along with this vanity is often joined an ill-regulated complacency, which regards the only sure proof of the high estimate in which the girl is held by her suitor, to be the extravagant words which are uttered, and the presuming and unwarranted liberties which are offered or taken.

3. From this vanity and complacency will spring the desire to obtain such extravagant words and unwarranted liberties, if for no other reason at least as a pledge for the reality of the professions of devotedness, and as a security for the continuance of the admiration.

4. There may never lurk in her mind the suspicion of a moment, when all considerations for her name and fame and happiness may be discarded, and when she may unexpectedly find herself the unwary victim of violence and passion.

Conventionalities.

5. Hence it is that good parents, and particularly a good mother, will lead Christian girls to understand that even society and worldly people affect certain conventionalities which have the appearance at least of preventing crime.

Security.

6. These conventionalities are principally: To avoid solitude, to be seen in the presence of witnesses, to observe good hours, and not to frequent disreputable places. In all intercourse with others to insist upon the observance of mutual respect in

word and act, and to admit of no other signs of affection beyond those legitimate and conventional expressions of attachments which may be exhibited in the presence of a good father and of a prudent mother.

Dangers. 7. No solitary walks at night in lonely places; no long solitary *seances* in rooms and houses alone; no solitary visits to hotels and restaurants, nor frequent solitary attendance at places of public amusement, whether theatre or concert, or dancing saloons, will be sanctioned by wise parents. These are the circumstances in which danger lurks and even stalks abroad.

Inebriety. 8. Nor again must it be forgotten to point out to young girls the danger which inebriety at any time on the part of the man even in its early stages may bring to her.

She must know that a man, good and honourable though he be at other times, may (if intoxicated) become the violent and ungovernable assailant.

In the absence of a mother or guardian protector, who shall venture to say that girls who should be exposed to all these temptations, not from necessity, but from foolish levity, wanton flirtation, and recklessness, will be able to pass through that ordeal unscathed?

Who will be bold enough to guarantee immunity from danger?

Escape improbable.

Who will expect the escape of the rash and foolish, and believe both name and fame to be unsullied?

May we not truly say here, "They who love the danger shall perish in it."

No wise mother will entrust the care of a daughter to a man alone, nor permit visits to concerts and theatres, dancing rooms, restaurants and hotels, much less journeys by rail, without reliable and suitable protection.

Children of Mary.

In dealing with the older girls, who attend Church regularly, and who are often gathered together in guilds and confraternities, and notably in the Guild of the Children of Mary, an opportunity is often afforded of special instructions and suggestions, which may fitly be addressed to them alone, and may be more explicitly expressed and be more impressively delivered.

Their consecration and emblems.

The director of a guild will often find a powerful means of influence over the Children of Mary, to be the constant repetition of the fact of their consecration and dedication to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Modesty and propriety suggest themselves as the becoming characteristics of the life of a Catholic girl and child of Mary.

Reference to their emblems and decorations, blessed and given to them as badges of service of the Queen of Heaven, and exhortations to daily prayer and devotion

to the Blessed Virgin Mary, will prove an efficient means of good.

Little Office—The Sacraments.

Devout recitation of the little office and regular frequentation of the Sacraments, if continued, may be described to them as one of the certain pledges of happy perseverance in grace, in prudence, and in wise conduct.

Special instructions suitable to these persons may be drawn out, and may be made effective by familiar illustrations and anecdotes.

Unequal matches.

All that has been said on the subject of company keeping will apply with still greater force to the case of those girls who receive attentions, flattery, offers of presents, and overtures from men who are in high positions, and who command great wealth, and who may in some instances be masters and employers.

Special caution is needed here. Nor can it be conceded that, even when the advances made are honourable, and the promises are likely to be fulfilled, such marriages are favourable to happiness.

The sense of inequality will be continuous, and the fact of inferiority will invariably be made apparent, and will be incessantly commented upon by displeased relatives and disappointed acquaintances.

Exceptional successes may not be considered to be a contradiction to the general rule.

III. Company Keeping (Young Men).

The admonitions already given in reference to the dangers and precautions in connection with company keeping will, *mutatis mutandis*, serve also for the instruction of youths and men.

For them is necessary an early training in piety, the practice and habits of virtue, and the frequentation of the Sacraments.

Salutary fear. In addition to this, they should be impressed with the fear of God and of His judgments.

Principles. The principles of honour, manliness, and courage, should be understood to be the necessary possession of a Christian young man when approaching a young Catholic girl for the purpose of professing attachment to her.

Outrage. The baseness and cowardice of any attempted outrage upon an innocent and helpless girl should be exposed, so as to excite the contempt and indignation of all right-minded men.

Very much more might be here added for the instruction and guidance of young men, but, on reference to the replies given to Questions II. and IV., it will be found that what might well have been said here, has been advisedly placed there.

IV. Proximate Preparation for Marriage.

The instructions as to the proximate preparation for marriage will embrace the following subjects:—

1. The duties and responsibilities of the married state.
2. Mutual vows of fidelity.
3. Purity of conscience, and purity of intention.
4. The divinely-appointed ends of marriage.

(*a*) The bearing and training of children for God.

(*b*) Mutual love and society. Reciprocal duties of husband and wife.

(*c*) A remedy against temptation.

5. Immediate preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of marriage, with instructions upon the marriage ceremony, nuptial mass, and nuptial blessing.

I. The duties and resposibilities of the married state may be gathered from the instruction in the English Ritual, and from St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians and Corinthians, indicated in the exhortation contained in the Ritual used in England, and will be found printed in *extenso* in the third part.

The chief matters to be adverted to here are, the respective positions of husband and wife, and their mutual vows.

In reference to the first, it may be explained that, although the contracting parties are to be equal in rank,

and companions, as well as sharers of fortune, trial, and sorrows, there is, nevertheless, a divinely-appointed subordination of position, which must be recognised and observed. The husband is to be acknowledged and obeyed as the head of the family; the wife is to be subject to him, and to obey him.

Husband.

The husband is to command, but, at the same time, he is to love his wife, and sustain and comfort her; to be gentle and kind—in a word, to love his wife as his own body.

Vows and duties. II. The parties to a marriage should fully understand the significancy of the solemn promise and engagement which they are about to make, viz.:—

1. A life-long fidelity under all circumstances.
2. Mutual love, patience, and forbearance.
3. Mutual piety which will enable them to walk hand-in-hand to heaven.

These duties and solemn pledges may be dwelt upon at length with profit, and be thus further explained.

Fidelity. I. There is to be, then, a mutual and solemn promise of fidelity made before God and His Church, that each will be faithful to the other throughout life, and under all circumstances, till death do them part.

This must be understood to imply a sacred obligation, not only of an union, but of a perpetual, sacramental,

and indissoluble union, so as to exclude the possibility of divorce for any reason whatever, which may hereafter be suggested through caprice or passion.

It must also be understood to imply the mutual duty of personal reverence, submission, and respect, not only as a sentiment, but as a principle of conduct.

Words or actions of imprudent or suspicious levity, and much more blameworthy conduct in social relations with others, are henceforth to be most sedulously avoided.

Marriage, beyond lawful conjugal intercourse, does not liberate either man or woman from the obligation of modesty and propriety of behaviour, nor from the observance of those wise rules and regulations of conduct, in all external relations with other persons, which are laid down for the guidance and safety of the unmarried in social life.

Over and beyond the morality, which must ever distinguish the Christian, there must be borne in mind the additional obligation of vows solemnly made and solemnly accepted.

Intercourse with others.

If at all times it be unlawful to sport with danger, to trifle with temptation, to court suspicion, or to invite the malicious to defame, more perhaps than ever, is it to be considered to be incumbent upon the married, to lead irreproachable lives in their relations with others, and to keep inviolate their plighted troth to each other, and to

avoid all cause or occasion for misunderstandings or misinterpretations as to fidelity.

Nor is it enough that each should be in mind and heart consciously free from taint. It is also necessary for each to study and to consider the circumstances of time and place, and so to speak, and so to act, as not thoughtlessly, much less deliberately, to give false impressions to each other, nor to wound the susceptibilities of each other, nor to give wanton offence or disedification by unguarded or imprudent intercourse with others, whether married or unmarried. The mutual love pledged at the altar, and which made of two one flesh, necessarily excluded all reserves, real or pretended. It rendered obligatory a course of conduct which should need no concealments, but should rather be characterised by the interchange of mutual confidence, and be distinguished by simplicity and candour in all the duties and transactions of life.

Although the mutual promise of fidelity is equally binding before God and the Church upon the man and the woman, and although the violation of this vow of fidelity is equally sinful before God and the Church in the case of both man and woman, yet may it be well for the pastor to recall for his own reflection the grave reasons which cause the violation of fidelity on the part of the woman to be regarded as a social as well as a personal crime. The consideration of these grave reasons may lead the pastor, not indeed perhaps to give any direct or explicit public instruction upon the

subject, but may enable him to realise, still more vividly, the value and importance of inculcating upon all Christian girls the practice and observance of modesty. Moreover, he will be led to speak in judicious but earnest terms upon the all important duty, now incumbent upon the future bride, to prize and value as her dearest treasure, innocence before marriage and conjugal fidelity after marriage.

Conjugal Infidelity on the Part of the Woman not only a Personal, but a Social Crime.

"Amongst the first duties of a father is that of provision for his children. In order that he should fulfil this duty, he ought to have moral certainty that they are, indeed, his children. This is reasonable. The motive of his exertion on their behalf is that they are his own, and a reproduction of himself. Hence, the necessity of fidelity on the part of the woman. Her fidelity is essential to the matrimonial idea, for without her fidelity the family relations become uncertain, the family rights are weakened in their foundations, and the family duties lose their force of obligation.

Infidelity on the part of the woman, and consequent uncertainty with regard to the paternity of her children, deprives the man also of another mainspring of exertion. Man covets honours as well as riches; and his honours,

as well as his riches, he accumulates, not for himself alone, but for his posterity after him, or, for himself, in his posterity. Now, if uncertainty is introduced with regard to his relation to those who, in virtue of the marriage, may legally claim to bear his name, and to reflect his honours, as well as to possess his riches, he is deprived of one of the main motives of action which lead men to do good service for the State.

But, above all, man is, by his wife's infidelity, defrauded of the full exercise of his paternal love. How can that man love, with a father's love, a child, who may be that of another, and that other his greatest enemy, who has wrought him the most grievous wrong, and done him the foulest dishonour?

Hence, we see the real reasonableness of that social ordinance which visits so heavily a woman's sin against chastity, while similar sins on the man's part are so easily condoned. The man's sin is single; the woman's sin is twofold. Both have sinned against God; in God's sight both are equally guilty, and both merit, at God's hands, the same punishment. But the woman has sinned *also against society* as the man has not sinned, and cannot sin; and the woman justly meets, *at the hands of society*, a punishment which is not inflicted on the man. Her conjugal infidelity, by rendering the paternity of her offspring uncertain, has loosened the framework of society." *

* Christian Marriage. Rev. Fr. Humphry, S.J.

V. Points of Instruction upon the Worthy Preparation for Marriage.

THE ENDS AND OBLIGATIONS OF MARRIAGE.

I. The bearing, training, and education of children will be described as the first legitimate end of marriage.

First end of marriage.

"They must bring up their children for God." This is an important subject.

How necessary is it to induce persons pledged to be married, to regard their marriage as the means of bringing into the world immortal souls whom God will entrust to their care and keeping, as a sacred charge for Himself, and whom He destines to be added to the number of blessed spirits, who are to reign eternally with Him.

They are, then, to be stewards and guardians, as well as parents. As the mother of Moses nursed and tended her child for the great king Pharoah, so may parents be taught to do for the great King of Heaven. They are to be entrusted with the care of a great and priceless treasure.

How well may Christian maidens, when about to be united in marriage, be taught to reverence and love the sainted models of Christian mothers of the past ages of the Church.

Mary, the Mother of God, will be their first bright thought, and their first blessed pattern—St. Monica

and St. Elizabeth, of Hungary, and many others, will be remembered as salutary examples for admiration and imitation.

From these noble heroines they will learn the truth that they become mothers in order that they may bring up their children for God.

II. Mutual Love and Society.

Second end of marriage.

The married parties have to love each other in God and for God. They have to live together. They will meet daily for conversation and social intercourse.

They must be to each other a source of comfort and consolation. There must not only be a constant interchange of ideas and sentiments, but also a display of mutual willingness to yield to each other from time to time. There must be a mutual desire and united effort to cause peace and harmony to reign in their dwelling throughout their married life.

It will be said at the altar, that they must not only love each other, respect and reverence and study to please each other, as well as avoid giving wilful displeasure to each other, but, further, that they must bear and forbear with each other.

These last words imply a great deal. There arises, now, the obligation of bearing with each other. This is a difficulty, perhaps at first sight not obvious, but later may be discovered, by experience, to be serious.

Mutual failings, part of the accepted burden.

The weaknesses, the failings, the errors, and the idiosyncrasies, which time will disclose, form a part of the burden voluntarily and deliberately undertaken. These weaknesses and failings, then, have been accepted beforehand, as part of the contract, ("*for better and for worse,*" they mutually promised), and, therefore, may not afterwards be regarded as a just pretext for recrimination, abusive language, and reproach, much less for separation or divorce. The contracting parties are pledged to bear with each other's weaknesses, and to forbear, till death do them part. There is need, therefore, of great mutual patience, toleration, and endurance, and a readiness to acknowledge faults, as well as a willingness to forgive and forget them.

This obligation is laid upon them as a solemn duty to be observed, not only in the sunshine of prosperity, but under the clouds of adversity; not only in the bloom of health, but in the hour of trial, sickness, and sorrow.

They must be faithful to each other, love each other, and bear with each other until death.

Daily prayer and the Sacraments.

It is for the fulfilment of these duties, then, that they are to kneel daily in prayer. For this they are to seek the strength of the Sacraments, and by the faithful discharge of these sacred obligations are they to walk hand in hand to heaven.

Ignorance of these obligations.

Obvious and intelligible as might appear to be the nature of this reciprocal duty of patience and forbearance, nevertheless it requires but little experience to enable the pastor to discover that the first elementary notions of these reciprocal duties, *i.e.*, of submission and obedience and of mutual forbearance, are often not understood, but seldom fulfilled, and are frequently grossly violated with sad consequences to the married life.

Hence is the second end for which marriage was instituted oftentimes frustrated.

How clear is the conclusion to be inferred in numberless cases that the contracting parties knew not, much less understood, all that was implied in the promises made, and in the obligations contracted.

In a few short weeks or months, it may happen that differences of disposition and differences of opinions, wishes, and sentiments manifest themselves, and that obedience and submission are refused. Tempers break out; sullen obstinacy is disclosed; passion and violent anger appear on the scene, and cause sad results; contradiction, opposition, appeals to others, the objectionable and offensive introduction of relatives into house and home, ceaseless wrangling and mutual reproaches, are often the certain evidence of ignorance and misconception of duties disregarded, and of obligations unfulfilled. Then may follow graver sorrows and more fatal misfortunes. Anger, wild and uncontrolled, springing from vexation and disappoint-

ment, may bring in the demon of drunkenness to blast and blight if not utterly destroy the peace and happiness of house and home.

Previous instruction necessary.

Who will say, then, that it is not a charity on the part of a pastor to inculcate in season and out of season the nature of the mutual obligations solemnly accepted by the parties to a Christian marriage?

If the woman be the weaker vessel, and be destined in most cases to suffer, who shall not be credited with zeal and charity who will endeavour beforehand to instruct her not only in vague and general terms, but in the practical details of her obligations and duties.

She desires her home to be a happy home. Of what consequence, then, is it to enlighten her, and persuade her to accept the truth that in the majority of cases her happiness or misery is, comparatively speaking, entirely in her own hands?

This instruction will embrace the following points:—

1. That as before marriage, so after marriage must she seek to please her husband. Not only must she be as careful about her personal appearance and attire as she was before marriage, but there must ever be a solicitude shown in studying to anticipate his wishes and pleasure.

That what she did before marriage in this matter, prompted possibly by vanity or affection, she may now do, through a high sense of duty, and for higher and holier motives.

2. That for her, the secret of a happy home is the secret of making the husband love it and find his happiness in it.

3. That if she fail to learn this secret, and have the misfortune to render home unattractive or positively displeasing to her husband, she must remember that other allurements and pleasures are already provided elsewhere for him, and that persons and places are prepared to supply the needed attentions.

4. That a scolding, slovenly, and slatternly wife will not make a home attractive to a husband, or be calculated to ensure peace, but will rather tend to banish him, and drive him to seek other society and other pleasures, which will be neither good for him nor her.

5. That no matter what the fancied provocation, injury, or injustice complained of may be, the remedy is not to be found in vituperative abuse and reproaches. Her weapon of defence must not be the envenomed tongue. What oil is to the flame, the match to the explosive, that is the tongue of an angry woman in the case of an erring husband, even though he be deeply conscious of his unhappy conduct.

A wife's duty.

A woman must know and remember that she is pledged on marriage to obey her husband. She is no longer independent of him or of his will.

She is no longer independent as formerly, and at her own disposal. She belongs to another. This

means a surrender of herself and a constant ready deference to her husband, and a willing submission to him for all the lawful ends for which she was married.

6. A wife, then, may have troubles and wrongs to bear; and who has not?

Her remedy.

She may be harassed, tormented, and stung to the quick by her husband; but as there is a time for all things, so is there a judicious time and a favourable opportunity for her, which she must patiently seek and wait for. She has a secret power and a compelling influence, if she will only act prudently.

7. But suppose the worst; let the follies of the husband be indefinitely multiplied; let his faults be numberless; even then, the scolding, bitter, railing, reproachful tongue will not prove successful.

Appeal to others of no avail.

8. It must be remembered that although when exposing her troubles, sorrows, wrongs, and injuries to others, her statement may be accepted, and the verdict of all may be given in her favour; nevertheless, she has to continue to live with that man—her husband. The appeal to others or the interference of others will not necessarily bring peace to her home. Yet peace must be had at any personal cost of silence and endurance.

9. Not only is divorce out of the question and impossible, but even separation is not lawful except

for a just cause; and if present troubles are the result of a wife's imprudence, or want of tact, how will she justly seek a separation?

10. Separation indeed may, under specially aggravating and serious circumstances, be justifiable, but even when justifiable, may not be always desirable or advisable.

11. The considerations which must ever weigh with a Christian woman, and influence her in her decision to remain with her husband and children, and not break up her home, are of the gravest kind. Therefore, there ever recurs the necessity for a woman to know beforehand that her happiness for life is nearly always in her own hands.

12. The fulfilment of her duties, the prudent thoughtfulness as to appearance, cleanliness, and attire, economy, and the unmistakable care of the house; the considerate provision and arrangement of meals; in a word, all that will conduce to please and attract her husband will go very far to win the battle.

13. Patience, kindness, and tact must be ever displayed.

14. Submission, obedience, and docility are to be her *rôle.*

15. A golden secret (if discovered) will be to understand when and how to be silent, and when and how to speak.

Wife's Triumph.

16. Then comes the triumph. The submission made, the obedience rendered,

the prudent silence, consideration, and tact observed, are then rewarded with the husband's heart's affection, with his reciprocal submission, consideration, and compliance, with his readiness to oblige, and docility to receive and accept loving counsel and advice.

Above all, will she have secured the joy and happiness, which form the crown of a good wife. She will have won the true love and confidence of a husband, whom she has brought to love his home, and find his best consolation there. Then may she lead him, and accompany him through life, walking with him hand in hand to heaven.

Points of Instruction as to the Duties of the Husband.

Husband.

Much has been said as to the duties and necessary obligations of the wife.

Much, also, can be said of the responsibilities of the husband.

The husband, as has been already stated, is the divinely-appointed head of the family.

The head and the ruler.

It is for him to rule, direct, and govern. His will is law. He is to be obeyed; but, as in the case of all other superiors having authority from God, his government must not be *in destructionem* (to destroy), but *in edificationem* (to edify).

It is a great thing to have a giant's strength; it may be a cruel thing to use it.

The husband has perhaps induced his wife to leave a peaceful, happy home. Her life hitherto may have been without anxiety or sorrow.

His previous promises.

She was free and independent. He has made her a sacred promise that if she will surrender that liberty, and transfer it to him for life, he will in turn love and cherish her, make her his equal, and transfer to her rights over him which shall be shared by no other during her life. He promised to make her happy, not for a day, a week, or a month, but through life, till death, and under all circumstances.

She has now surrendered her freedom. She has trusted his word; she has committed herself to his keeping.

What if he prove false to his word, faithless to his pledge, deceitful to his promise?

What if he disregard all the previous assurances of love and protection? He is strong, she is weak. He is her natural protector. To him must she look for all things.

Bad husband.

If, then, the husband, having allured his wife from her home, should now prove unfeeling and unsympathetic. If, instead of peace and happiness, he cause her sadness and grief; if he not only prove untrue to all his former protestations of kindness, tenderness, and affection, but should become a bully, a cruel taskmaster, a brute, a sot, a source of misery and wretchedness, where are his sentiments of honour, courage, truthfulness, and manliness?

What shall be the future account to be rendered for the betrayal of that trust?

If the wife was good and virtuous up to her marriage, then had he brought an angel of grace to his home. If he, afterwards, by harsh treatment and cruelty to her, destroy her peace of mind, and drive her to anger and despair, and to curse the day on which she was born; if she soon lose that grace which was her rich possession before marriage, will not the husband undoubtedly be judged as an oppressor, and be held responsible for her misery?

When he married her, he took her to be his equal, not to be his slave, not to be a victim for the exercise of his cruelty. He pledged his word to love her, not to ill-treat her, not to poison her existence, not to make life unbearable and death preferable. How great, then, is the responsibility of the husband before God. How great is his power for good or for evil. How extensive for happiness or misery his influence. By sobriety and temperance he will be fitted for prayer and holy duties; by recourse to prayer he will obtain light and grace to fulfil his obligations.

Intemperance. On the other hand, intemperance will prove unfavourable to piety. Prayer will be neglected. The Church will be seldom visited. Sacraments will be ignored. Hence, will follow all the woes and sorrows of the married life such as we so often witness in these our days.

Let, then, the husband beware of the evils of intemperance.

The place for a man to seek, after the hours of employment are over, is his own home—the company, his wife and children. If he has toiled hard all day, the wife, too, has spent her time for him. Hard work of another kind has been her lot. She has, perhaps, had a day of solitude. She has looked forward to his return. She has studied his comforts and prepared his meals. She is eager to meet him and anxious to please him.

On his return he is tired, dispirited may be; but let him beware of unjustly visiting his spleen upon his innocent wife. Let him guard himself against unreasonable fault-finding, and unwarranted manifestations of displeasure. But what shall be said of the man who sees no attractions in home or wife? Who has his heart and affections centred in public-houses? Who finds in the companions frequenting these places a pleasure preferable to all the happiness that might be his possession at home?

What words of condemnation shall be found for the man, who deliberately gives himself up to the vice and habit of drunkenness; who hardens his heart against the cries of wife and children; who criminally drinks the money that ought to find bread and clothes; who returns nightly or weekly no longer a reasonable man, but a beast of prey, a very demon from below; the terror of all who come in his presence?

But let us not suppose the worst case. How often it happens that a man, after marriage, loses his former practices of piety, grows careless and indifferent, and comes to be numbered with the absentees from Church and Sacraments.

Perseverance.

How many men will continue fervent up to the day of marriage, and then, by degrees, lose their earnestness, and gradually fall into habits of sloth, and become a source of disedification by their bad example?

It becomes, therefore, a matter of the first importance that men, contemplating marriage, should have been already trained in habits of virtue; and that, as a preparation for their married life, they should be seriously and carefully instructed in their own special duties of kindness, sympathy, and charity to their future wives, and in their obligations of keeping faithful to their religious duties and practices of piety, and of becoming an example of edification to all.

For this end must it be impressed upon them that it is absolutely necessary to avoid evil companions as a pest, and intemperance as a source of certain misery.

Third end of marriage.

Man and woman have fallen from their state of original justice and righteousness. The body passions, inclinations, and every motion of the human frame were once under the control of reason.

Now, passions are unruly, inclinations are perverse and vicious, and the body rages with inordinate desires, which are ever seeking gratification.

This rebellion of the flesh must be legitimately resisted or legitimately subdued and quelled. Heaven and hell may be said to depend upon the manner of this resistance, and upon its successful result.

The religious in the cloister, the nun in her convent, the priest in his sacred calling, have each and all pledged themselves by vow to resist, and fight to the bitter end, the relentless cruel foe of concupiscence.

They who propose to marry, elect a legitimate means of diminishing, and subduing, the fire of temptation. "It is better to marry than to burn."

As a sacrilegious reception of matrimony would take place if contracted in a state of sin, it might be explained that it is a wise as well as a pious practice counselled, even though it be not exacted, to approach the Sacraments some weeks before the day of marriage, and also on the day of marriage itself.*

In guarded language may the parties to be married be reminded of the necessity of purity of intention on their part.

It may be pointed out to them that this purity of intention will be shown in the desire to contract marriage for the lawful ends appointed by God, which have been already explained, viz. :—

* See Part III., Council of Westminster.

1. For the bearing, training, and education of children.

2. For mutual love and society.

3. As a lawful remedy against concupiscence.

From the explanation, which has just been given at considerable length, of the ends and obligations of the holy state of marriage, and of the nature of the reciprocal duties of patience, forbearance, and mutual love on the part of the husband and wife, it will have been seen how great is the need of divine grace and of continued divine aids, for those who receive the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony, and undertake the responsibilities of the married state.

It will be therefore profitable for the pastor to consider, and reflect upon the great need which exists for grace to enable the married parties to continue faithful through life, and it will be opportune for him to instruct those under his care, both as to the nature of the sacramental graces imparted to the worthy recipients of the Sacrament of matrimony, and also to instruct them still more, as to the special need they have of securing these divine helps.

The Sacramental Graces of Matrimony.

Sanctifying grace.

"Like every other Sacrament, matrimony confers an increase of sanctifying grace. It is this grace which makes its possessor holy. Hence its name of sanctifying grace. It is also called

habitual grace, as distinguished from actual grace. Actual grace is bestowed in order to an act. It is transient, as is that act. It passes away. Habitual grace abides. Habitual sanctifying grace once bestowed remains in the soul of its receiver so long as it is not expelled by the commission of mortal sin. Along with this sanctifying grace, which is habitual and abiding, matrimony confers also a right to actual graces, to be bestowed by God in time of need, and in aid of those special needs which matrimonial life entails. This matrimonial life has been already in part described, and in that portion of it we have seen, that it has, of necessity, its own sorrows as well as its own joys, its own sufferings as well as its own pleasures, and its own burden as well as its own solace. The state of matrimony, moreover, as we have already explained, has its own duties as well as its own rights, and in order to their due fulfilment the strength of the noblest nature requires to be supplemented by the strength of divine grace. If there is a state of life which requires—nay, demands—a Sacrament, that state is Matrimony.

Actual graces.

Graces of the Sacrament necessary.

Apart from all other difficulties, the unity of matrimony, or its absolute restriction of a man to one consort, along with its indissolubility, or the essentially life-long nature of the bond would be for the frailty of fallen nature a burden greater than it could bear, were it not for the succours of the grace of God.

If human nature were left to itself, and to its own resources, the novelty of pleasure, would, by and by, be swallowed up in satiety, and the love of the senses, which seek variety, would ere long crave for satisfaction in other objects. The love that is fed by bodily beauty must die away with old age. It is of its own nature as corruptible and as evanescent as is that from which it springs. It is mortal, and is bound to die, unless grace lends to it a life which is not its own. The love of the senses is blind to its own briefness, and when its eyes are opened its days are ended.

The sacramental grace imparted in the Sacrament of Matrimony, and which was purchased by Jesus Christ on the cross, is bestowed for the strengthening of the married, in their mutual love, in their fidelity to each other, and in the observance of each other's rights for the well-ordering of their intercourse, in accordance not merely with the promptings of sensual love and animal desire, but with the dictates of human reason, and of that reason as enlightened by divine religion, and for the education and government of their children as Christian subjects in a Christian home. Further, along with this sacramental grace, there is bestowed by means of the Sacrament of Matrimony an increase of theological and of moral virtues; and among these the foremost place is held by the four which claim it—by charity and piety, by fidelity and patience.

An increase of theological and moral virtues.

A married life which is adorned with these jewels

is a life which is after the pattern of married life as it exists in the mind of Christ. It is the fruit and flower of a sacrament. It meets the eye as the visible expression of Christian marriage."*

When the parties about to be married have been well instructed upon the sacramental graces which a worthy reception of the Sacrament of Marriage will infallibly bring to them, they may be the more easily induced to prepare carefully for the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion.

The pastor will understand well how to direct those who are preparing to make a confession preparatory to marriage, and to explain the dispositions with which the Holy Communion should be approached and received.

Already will the pastor have cautioned the parties to be married, as to the necessity of their discreet conduct, and already will he have indicated to them the consolation of approaching the altar, without having lost their innocence, and without having anticipated the rights of marriage.

As the time now approaches for the celebration of the marriage, attention may be drawn to the order, words, and ceremonial of the marriage ceremony, and also to the method of sanctifying the wedding day.

It may be shown that, whilst reasonable signs of joy, and legitimate mirth, and the social entertain-

* Essay on Marriage. By the Rev. Fr. Humphry, S.J.

ment of friends are lawful in the celebration of the happy event, nevertheless, that a Christian marriage, as distinguished from a merely worldly marriage, should, when possible, be characterised by the observance of the following recommendations :—

1. A short time of previous recollection or spiritual retreat, if feasible.

2. Previous reception of the Sacraments by both parties.

3. The reception of Holy Communion by both parties on the morning of the marriage, if practicable.

4. The reception of Holy Communuion by the immediate attendants, if practicable.

5. The celebration of the wedding during Holy Mass, and, if possible, during the prescribed Nuptial Mass.

6. Christian conduct on departure from the Church, and during the wedding day. Care in avoiding all scandal and disedification.

Attention may be here directed to the beautiful thoughts which are contained in a description of a Christian marriage, as it formerly obtained in a Catholic country, and which will be found printed *in extenso* at the close of this chapter.

Marriage ceremony.

An instruction may, with profit, be given upon the marriage ceremony itself, as it takes place at the altar. Allusion may be fitly

made beforehand, to the form of words, which each will have to repeat, and to the exact form of solemn promise which each will have to utter.

The meaning of the ring may be impressively pointed out as signifying the fidelity which must distinguish the woman through life. The words of the blessing of the ring should be understood. The words of wedlock publicly spoken aloud, with clasped hands, should be known beforehand. The meaning of the gift of silver,—the force and signification of the vows made to continue their fidelity under all circumstances of life, and under all the various vicissitudes and fluctuations of fortune—should be explained and understood.

The meaning, origin, and efficacy of the Nuptial Mass will be wisely explained, and all classes of Catholics should be exhorted to sanctify their marriage by obtaining its celebration.

It will here occur to the pastor to refer to the special fitness and appropriateness of associating every marriage (where possible) with the celebration of Holy Mass. It was for the special purpose of sanctifying marriage, and of keeping the exalted idea of its holy sacramental character before the mind of the people that a special form of votive Nuptial Mass was prescribed for the wedding morning. How well then will that pastor do his Lord's work who shall, by his assiduity and zeal, not only instruct his people upon this subject, and create a laudable desire amongst them

of complying with this most praiseworthy prescription of the Church, but who shall moreover offer every inducement, and create every facility, for the observance of this most edifying and beneficial ecclesiastical disciplinary arrangement.

The pastor will do well to explain that the marriage ceremony is so intimately connected with the celebration of Holy Mass, that the special nuptial blessing which forms so important and so integral a portion of it, is directed to be pronounced by the officiating priest at the most solemn part of the service.

Nuptial blessing.

The words of the nuptial blessing should be read and understood beforehand, and all its petitions should be seriously reflected upon, and their concession longed for.

The exhortation prescribed to be read to the parties about to be married, by the priest before the celebration of the marriage, as well as that appointed to be read at the close of the ceremony, and to be found in the English Ritual, should be brought before their notice before the day of marriage.

These touching and impressive words, as well as the entire order of the marriage service, will be found in the third part of this volume; suggestions are also added as to the proclamation of banns, dispensation from banns, and regulations as to the selection of the church in which the marriage is to be celebrated, as well as instructions for the observance of the legal forms, and the necessary legal preliminaries.

The following long and edifying description of Catholic ceremonial and Catholic usage and customs, as formerly witnessed in some Catholic countries will prove interesting and instructive.

The particular details may not necessarily commend themselves to the judgment of persons of this country. The aim and object of all the ceremonial, however, as well as the spirit which is breathed throughout, cannot but be a source of edification.

Description of the Marriage Ceremony—Catholic Countries.

Besides therefore calling attention to the words of the marriage ceremony of the ritual, and in addition to the instructions appointed to be read before and after the ceremony, it will be calculated to impress still more upon the minds of the persons about to be married the deeply religious character of the Church's ceremonial, if some of the customs and observances of other countries be described.

In these ceremonies, which obtained in former times, we find prominently put forward the religious aspect of Christian marriage, especially in the matter of the celebration of the Nuptial Mass, during which the ceremony of the marriage usually takes place. Moreover, no false delicacy is shown in avoiding plain allusions to those Christian duties and obligations which form at once the primary object of the sacramental contract.

Whilst then the votaries of the world are wholly occupied, at such times, in studious preparation for ostentatious display, striking pageantry, costly dress, and luxurious banquets; whilst religion is found to have but little place in the thoughts and minds of those more immediately concerned, the traditions and usages of the Church in Catholic countries, prove clearly that no pains were spared to fix, in the minds of Christians, the paramount duty of making religion the first thought at a time of marriage; and that no means were left untried, to invest not only the entire ceremony in the Church, but also all the previous and subsequent arrangements, with a sacred and religious character.

It is not pretended that worldliness, vanity, and luxury are not to be found in Catholic countries, or that human weakness, passions, and follies are not ever seeking to assert themselves even amongst professing Christians. It is desired to point out the clear and unmistakeable design of the Church, which is apparent throughout all the ceremonial.

Her entire ritual, and her prescribed and sanctioned usages, keep prominently before the minds of the contracting parties, as well as of their friends and relatives, the spiritual and religious aspect of Christian marriage. All other considerations are kept in their proper subordinate place.

An account of a Christian marriage with its significant ceremonial will now be given. In this description

will be found a detailed enumeration of the various significant and typical ceremonies introduced and sanctioned by ecclesiastical authority, with the one object of securing the predominance of the spiritual and religious over the merely temporal, wordly, and carnal element.

A Description of the Arrangements and Ceremonial, Formerly Observed, in Reference to Marriage, in some Catholic Countries.

"Amongst all nations, and in all times, the wedding day, upon which two young persons are united at the altar, has ever been regarded as a day of importance and solemnity. Marriage is, for most persons, a step which decides the character and complexion of their life, and of their future, in time and in eternity.

When the betrothed desired to celebrate their marriage, or their wedding breakfast, they would appoint a procurator, or master of ceremonies, in whose hands were placed the entire arrangements. This person was formerly regarded as very important. St. Augustine (*Ser 293 and Goar fol. 385*) represents him as the counsellor of the betrothed, as to the mysteries of the new state of life, and as the instructor and teacher, whose office it was to unfold the obligations of the married state.

One of the canons laid down for observance, and

attributed to Pope Evaristus (*c. 30, quest. 5, c. 1*), commits to him the duty of watching over the betrothed during the time of their engagement. He was regarded much as sponsors are now looked upon in baptism, and an impediment was contracted between him and the young girl. There were customs for the day previous to the wedding, and also for the morning breakfast. The procession from the house of the bride's parents, on the morning of the marriage, was imposing, and the young girls, and especially the betrothed, wore crowns as signs of their virginity.

On the way to the Church, the bride was met by the bridegroom, who saluted her.

They both then repaired to the Church to place themselves under the care and protection of heaven, and thus realised the following beautiful words of Tertullian :—

"Whence shall I be able, adequately, to describe the felicity of that marriage which the Church sanctions, which mutual consent realises, and the registration of which angels record—and the Eternal Father confirms and ratifies?" *

6. When the procession has entered the Church, the priest receives the betrothed with signs of joy and honour; for he beholds, standing before him, a young man and a young woman supplicating the Saviour to bless the resolution which they have taken to walk

* Tertull ad uxor 1, II. c. 9.

hand-in-hand to heaven. The joy of the faithful is shown in the East by the illumination of candles, which, at their entrance into the Church, the priest puts into the hands of all those who are connected with the marriage, and which are held lighted until the close of the ceremony. This custom was also observed in the West. Marzhol * speaks of a candle decorated with flowers and ribands, which, as the procession advanced into the Church, a young girl, dressed in white, carried in front of all, and which was then placed on the altar, and was allowed to burn during the rest of the ceremony. The Church, by this ceremony, seems to say:—"I praise your resolution; avoid, during all your life, works of darkness; walk always in the light; sanctify one another, in order that the Saviour may find you with burning lamps in your hands at the moment when He will call you to His nuptials."

7. The betrothed present themselves before the altar to be united. As they desire to walk in the presence of God all their lives, their alliance is fitly contracted before the altar. The act of union is as simple as it is solemn. The man and the woman promise mutually, in terms short and terse, to honour each other, to love each other as husband and wife, never to desert each other in time of sickness, or in any trouble or sorrow, and to live together until death shall separate them.

They clasp hands, and then together place a ring on

* Marzhol Lib. t. III., p. 540.

the third finger of the left hand. Then the priest declares in the name of God that their union is lawful and sanctioned by the Church. He prays to God that the married couple may never forget that they belong to each other most intimately; that the ring may ever remind them that they have been mutually pledged to each other before the altar; and that they should ever keep before them the thought that God has deemed them worthy to bring forth immortal beings, and by this means to increase the number of the elect.

8. Then the Church hastens to call down upon them the favours of heaven—that is to say, to pronounce upon their union that blessing which takes place either immediately after the marriage is performed, or at the time of the celebration of Holy Mass.

During this blessing the priest asks from God not only spiritual and temporal goods for the married parties, but also a numerous posterity. "May they both," he prays, "see their children and their children's children."

The Eastern Church symbolises this prayer, as formerly did the Western Church, by a touching ceremony. After the manner of the Jews* and also of the pagans, from the fourth century she places on the bride crowns—either branches of olive as in Greece, or crowns of silver or other metal as in Russia.

The priest then exclaims: "May these young

* Tertull de cor mil, c. 15.

married persons increase and multiply, like a tree whose powerful trunk puts forth branches on every side, and whose head is crowned with abundant fruit." "Mulieris corona vir est existimandus, viri autem matrimonium, matrimonii autem flores amborum filii." At the same time allusion is made to the victory which up to that time the betrothed have won by the preservation of their virginity.

Coronæ capillibus imponuntur symbolum victoriæ quod antea invicti se ad thalamum accedant quia non superati sunt a libidine.

However important may be the reasons of the Church for this supplication, the prayer is calculated to bring a blush to the virginal cheek. For this reason it is natural to cover the face, and hence the ancient custom is met with here and there, in the East, of covering or veiling the faces of the newly married couple while the nuptial blessing is pronounced. They are covered, says St. Isidore,* because they are naturally confused. The very word *nuptial* points to this custom. It means covered, *i.e.*, the girl is veiled to hide her confusion. "Nuptiae dictæ quod pudoris gratia puellæ se obnuberent." Sometimes the priest spreads a veil only upon the head of the bride, sometimes he spreads it upon the head of the bride and the shoulders of the bridegroom. Sometimes four young men hold it out at the four corners, whilst the two newly married parties prostrate themselves before the altar.

* Constitu. Apostl. 1, I. c. 10. Nicol I. ad consult Bulg. c. 3.

Now, if during the solemn utterance of the words of the nuptial blessing, the Church veils the newly-married, who have just given themselves up to each other, and who have mutually placed the ring upon the hand of the bride, and who have already by this very act renounced their further right and claim to maintain virginal modesty from the moment that their union was ratified, this beautiful and impressive as well as significant ceremony is intended to intimate to them that sexual intercourse, although perfectly innocent for the married, must nevertheless be directed by modesty, and remain a mystery concealed from all about them.

There is also in certain localities the custom of connecting together the newly-married couple by means of a red and white riband or cord, *vitta nuptialis*, to signify the indissoluble tie which unites them to each other.

The red and blue colours indicate the self-control and well-regulated conduct which should be observed in all marital intercourse.

What does the Apostle say to the married? asks St. Isidore. *Abstinete vos ad tempus, ut vacetis orationi.* . . Defraud not one another, except, perhaps, by consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to prayer. This injunction, the white band implies and signifies. . . . *Et iterum revertimini in idipsum—i.e.*, and return together again. This the purple colour is intended to express. . . . .

Immediately after the marriage, it has been the custom, from earliest times, to have the Holy Mass offered for the newly married couple. There is a special Mass appointed and inserted in the Missal for this occasion—the Nuptial Mass.

It is found in the Sacramentary of Gelasius.

During the Mass the newly-married pair and their united friends approached the altar to make their offering.

Formerly it was the custom for the newly-married pair to communicate.

The Holy Mass is the crown and apex of Christian worship, and, therefore, the fitting closing act of the celebration of Christian marriage. When the married parties are truly Christians they offer themselves to God as a living holocaust.

They lay aside all hatred, and seek to perform in Christ and with Christ the pilgrimage of life.

In former times, when the married pair arrived at their home they were solemnly conducted to the nuptial bed. This was probably the office of the procurator. The Church herself also appeared on the scene. Thus we read in one of the old French Missals of Paris of the fourth century, that the priest stood in front of the nuptial bed in which the married pair were either seated or reclining, and blessed the bed, and incensed it, as also the married persons. The same custom prevailed at Amiens, in France, except that the bride-

groom was seated at the head of the bed, and the bride at the foot. The blessing of the bed-chamber of ancient rituals is a remnant of this custom, which, whilst perfectly justifiable, nevertheless appeared to be somewhat objectionable, considering human frailty.

In our days the nuptial bed is blessed beforehand, as is enjoined in the Ritual of Strasbourg, 1742, and in the French Rituals. According to the Strasbourg Ritual, the priest repairs on the morning of the wedding to the residence of the future married parties, accompanied by many respectable persons. He approaches the nuptial bed, around which all present kneel, and pronounces the blessings of the ritual, and sprinkles the bed with holy water, as well as his attendants, and addresses a few words to them.

These ceremonies were intended only for those who had never been previously married, and who were presenting themselves at the altar for the first time.

In course of time, however, it came to pass that those who contracted a second marriage celebrated their union outside the Church with all the ceremonial and solemnity proper to first marriages." *

* Encycl.—Goschler.

CHAPTER XV.

Synopsis of Replies to Question IV.

Advantage of early recourse to a director before an engagement is made—Frequent infatuation on the part of the girl in the case of ineligible persons—Parties to be impressed with the truth that marriage is a holy and sacramental state—Company keeping, a time of temptation—Rules to be observed—The only security to render surprise impossible—Occasions of danger—Zeal of the confessor in explaining these dangers—Girl's safety in her own hands by the observance of rules—The girl to be taught the attractions of modesty—Melancholy position of an imprudent girl—Sad and bitter consequences of neglect of prudence—The thought of the fear of God, the safety of both—Rectitude on the part of the girl will win the husband's respect for life—Uprightness before marriage will secure a blessing for the whole of married life—Special treatment of young men—Their trials—Kindness and charity necessary in their regard—Special admonitions for their guidance—Suggestions for confessors—Treatment of relapsing penitents—The necessary conditions for the Sacrament of Penance—Five classes of relapsing penitents—Signs by which those manifestly indisposed may be recognised—First principle to guide the confessor and penitents—*Aut pœnitens, aut impenitens;* the same principle, differently expressed—Suggested mode of treatment of the disposed and in disposed—Signs by which good dispositions may be recognised—Second principle to guide the confessor—Seldom to defer absolution—Opposite practice deprecated—Confessor not legislator but *interpres legis*—Rules to guide confessor in dealing with sins of internal frailty—Present good dispositions compatible with previous past falls—Suggestions for the zealous confessor—*Quid prodest deferre absolutionem—Cui bono*—Important teaching of the learned Ballerini on this subject—Description of the confessor who is *Homo Dei* in the treatment of these relapsing penitents—Special example and practice of St. Alphonsus.

IV. How should he deal in confession with those who keep company?

It may always be regarded as a matter of congratulation and consolation if young persons who are keeping company have recourse to a priest and confessor at an early period of their intercourse, with the view of disclosing their intentions and of seeking counsel and direction.

Frequently false delicacy, or ignorance of the desirability of such a course, will cause persons to omit all mention of their courting, as it is termed, in confession, and still more frequently, to stay away from confession until the period has passed, and the day fixed for marriage is at hand.

A confessor may be called upon to give direction, and to adopt methods of action, in reference to very different classes of persons. Each particular case will have its own circumstances, and the parties contemplating marriage will have their own special needs and requirements. Accordingly, he will have to judge each case upon its own merits, and to offer direction to each particular person, according to the character, disposition, rank, influence, and surroundings which are made known.

General principles may however be laid down, and suggestions applicable to most cases may be offered.

Experience leads to the conclusion that, in cases of already formed acquaintances, recourse to confessors, by the young girl, for advice upon the elegibility

of her *affiancé* must be received with some suspicion and incredulity. It often happens that, before advice is sought, the determination has been formed to accept him, and although conscious insincerity may not be intended, the delusion of docility to advice will be in most cases quickly dispelled.

If the confessor learn that an acquaintance has been already formed, and should discover signs and reasons of inelegibility, or of inexpediency, or of probable future incompatibility likely to lead to an era of future unhappiness, he must not suppose that the mere explanation of these things, and the recommendation of the better course, will be always promptly or cheerfully accepted. In these matters, heart, sympathy, and affections have to be enlisted on the side of reason. These may have already gone out, and espoused the opposite side.

Whatever the confessor may plead in favour of a dissolution and separation, will be often met with ready replies and telling arguments, urged with warmth and cogency.

If the young man be "sowing his wild oats," as they say, it will be answered confidently that he has promised to reform. If he have led hitherto a thriftless, lazy life, the confessor is assured that after marriage he will begin to work "in the sweat of his brow." If the young man have already developed habits of dissipation and drunkenness, and appears frequently in public and in private in a state of inexcusable intoxication, to the

shame and degradation of all connected with him, nevertheless, the young girl will be often found to excuse, palliate, extenuate, and minimise the extent of the gravity of the terrible evil, and whilst apologetically defending him against the aspersions and reproaches of friends and enemies alike, will express the most unbounded confidence in his future temperate and sober career. The wedding day will see him reformed! Married life will give the wife the opportunity for the exercise and display of her influence! Then wil the world see the change, and marvel at its greatness!

O fallacem mulierum spem!

This is an infatuation, a delusion, a blindness, a spell, which frequently no argument can reach, which no persuasion can remove, and over which no entreaties can prevail. In many cases, nothing but proof, practical and positive, will suffice, to induce the misguided girl to see the ineligibility of her choice; but, alas! then it is too late!

There are, of course, cases when advice is sought in order to be taken. Then the confessor will be guided by circumstances in giving his decision. With regard to persons who are keeping company, and who are found ready and willing to approach the Sacraments, the following suggestions may be offered:—

1. In the first place, let it be considered a special grace given to the parties keeping company, that they should come to the Sacraments, should disclose the

fact of their engagement and should seek counsel and direction.

2. General admonitions as to the importance, gravity, and sacramental character of the married state will always be opportune. Advice may also be given as to the duty and necessity of prayer, and as to the great advantage of frequenting the Sacraments during this period, and especially immediately before receiving the Sacrament of marriage.

3. It will naturally occur to the mind of the confessor to be a wise admonition to remind them that the time of company keeping is a time of trial, temptation, and special danger. He will urge upon them that much caution, circumspection, and self-restraint, as well as great prudence and determination, are absolutely necessary to preserve innocence and avoid evil. Intercourse is unavoidable. Interchange of visits, frequent communication, and repeated promenades will be considered indispensably necessary for that knowledge of each other which prudence requires.

4. The confessor will explain that the danger and difficulty are found not in unavoidable and legitimate intercourse, nor in friendly and affectionate intercommunication, the peril arises from the abuse of confidence; and from the advantage which may be taken of privileged opportunities. Any such abuse of trust might inflict a grave injury upon the unsuspecting and innocent party, and would be a violation of the law of God.

5. Hence it will be incumbent upon the confessor to point out the fallacy of any fancied personal security, or of any special personal immunity from danger, or of any special confidence based upon the uprightness and integrity of the other party. Let the motto be, not that they suspect, but that they will give no place to others for suspicion, and that they place their security not in the conviction of the uprightness and honour of another, but in the determination to make danger a remote possibility. This will be done wisely and efficaciously by observing the usual conventionalities which are recognised by society in this matter.

The strong temptation on both sides to seek privacy and solitude for their company-keeping, whether in rooms or in walks, must be resisted. Similarly, visits to concerts, theatres, and balls, as well as journeys by rail and conveyance, if made *solus cum sola*, are fraught with danger. The reason is plain. Mutual attachment, growing affection, and increasing passion, provoke and encourage a desire to express that mutual good feeling and regard by external signs—*difficile est exuere naturam.*

Privacy and the absence of all witnesses afford an opportunity and a temptation for excessive marks of love.

Improprieties may easily occur, liberties may be taken, virtue may be lost, and there may arise the very serious case of a continued proximate occasion of sin.

In the case of the girl, the confessor may exercise great charity and zeal, if he will take the trouble to explain to her the admonitions which have already been drawn out at considerable length in the chapter on Company-Keeping, Question No. III.

It must be urged upon her, that prudent caution and inflexible firmness in not exposing herself to the possibility of danger are indispensable for her safety; that difficult as it may be for her to realise the peril, it will ever be true that danger is ever imminent in her regard, and that oftentimes all that is required to accomplish her ruin is the opportunity of privacy.

Nor must it be thought that such a catastrophe might only occur in the case of the designing and unprincipled suitor. Let her remember that her safety and security must ever be to render sinful liberties impossible at the hands of all by taking the necessary precautions.

With good effect may it be pointed out that her name and fame are at stake, which, once blighted, will be sullied for life; that when catastrophes happen, they are not always the result of previous design or of intentional malice, or of forethought on the part of the girl, but that they may be the result of the unbridled passion of her suitor. Consequently, she must ever understand that it is her duty, in self-preservation, to avoid fanning that flame beyond due limits, and to regard herself ever as a possible powerless victim.

Let her, therefore, bear in mind that any injury or injustice, or outrage which may supervene, can only

happen, as a rule, so far and so often, and in such a manner as she may deliberately choose to bring them upon herself by neglecting the necessary wise precautions for her safety.

Hence it is consistent with modesty and the conventionalities of life to adopt the maxim, that a girl is not to court, but to be courted. To respect herself, if she is to be respected. That becoming reserve and circumspection will be found a talisman, both in exciting and in securing honourable and legitimate admiration. Levity of conduct, on the other hand, bidding for notice, and reckless flirtation may draw flatterers, but will not enhance her reputation or win esteem or confidence.

It is necessary for a young girl to understand that any professions of love or passion which are not accompanied with due regard for her name, and which are not proved by honourable protection and reverence for her virtue, are to be indignantly and firmly rejected.

Let her ask herself, of what value is that profession of devotedness, made by a suitor for her hand, which is manifestedly associated with the desire to sacrifice her name and fame, and expose her to shame and infamy, for a moment's selfish gratification and indulgence.

In no case would it be other than folly, madness, and sin for her to listen, much less to consent, to criminal overtures.

Supposing her to have yielded to such overtures, what is her position? What hold has she upon the

seducer for the fulfilment of any promise of marriage? What if he refuse to keep his pledge? What if the condition of the fulfilment of his promise be the continued consent to the infliction of further injury?

Suppose, on the other hand, that disclosures and revelations are immediately brought to light in his regard, which render their union most unadvisable or perchance impossible?

What if it be discovered that she has been deceived, and that the deceitful suitor is not free to marry?

Who shall describe the sense of shame, the exquisite torture, or the terrible life-long punishment, which is often the sad result of trifling with danger?

Many sources of peril have been already enumerated. But who can be ignorant of the impropriety, the inevitable scandal and absolute unlawfulness for the girl to remain in the same dwelling during such times with her *affiancé*, except under most exceptional circumstances, and except under conditions of the strictest surveillance.

Another matter for advertence, is the wisdom of keeping before the mind the thought of the presence and of the fear of God—*Confige timore tuo carnes meas.* This thought will tend to the observance of propriety of behaviour.

The girl should be made to understand that admiration, and confidence, respect, and love, are gained not by compliance with the irregular, inordinate, unlawful, and sinful desires and overtures of others, but by the

display of modesty, and by the exhibition of firmness in the refusal to commit sin and offend God.

The reward for fidelity to God and for the preservation of virtue before marriage will be the life-long deep respect and affectionate regard of the husband, and his reluctance to entertain suspicions or jealous thoughts in her regard.

She will be ever remembered by her husband as the proved example of modesty and virtue—as a woman of honourable principles and of sound morality. She will be entitled to his admiration, respect, and gratitude all through her married life.

Moreover, it should be stated with impressiveness, that there will ever be an untold consolation for the young Christian maiden who stands at the altar on the day of her marriage, conscious of her own integrity and also of having by her prudence and tact prevented her future husband from falling a victim to passion in her regard.

This consolation will continue as a sweet thought and a joyful reminiscence through life. Conscious of her past innocence, she can ever claim her husband's love and respect, and the past proof of her virtue is her present pledge of fidelity till death.

Lastly, it may serve to impress the penitent favourably and effectually, if it be explained that the married state brings with it, besides the happiness and delights which are pictured as belonging to it, also difficulties, sorrows, trials, responsibilities, duties, and anxieties.

In order to be able to sustain this burden, graces and blessings are promised to those who worthily prepare for the Sacrament of matrimony.

Now, it may be repeated, a cheerful abstention from sinful liberties and an earnest preparation for the reception of this Sacrament will undoubtedly ensure the gift of all the necessary sacramental graces and spiritual aids.

No. 2. How should the confessor deal with those who are keeping company—(young men)?

How shall the confessor treat youths and young men at the time of company keeping?

How shall he essay to direct and guide them?

Their temptations are legion.

They are disquieted and harassed by passions, and emotions, and illusions from within; they are the victims of vicious customs and bad examples from without.

They are now under the dominion of the strongest passions that can agitate the human breast. They are inexperienced. They are frail, and may be vanquished by the temptations which assail them. Not only may they fall, but, in their misfortune, may be associated the moral ruin of others. How then must the confessor act in their regard?

If such youths and young men come to the tribunal of penance the confessor will know how to value the advent of such penitents, and to see, in their approach, a providential opportunity for good.

His treatment, reception, and welcome will be characterised by kindness and fatherly advice, and by a marked interest in their welfare, as well as by a willingness to take time and trouble in the solution of their difficulties.

His manner, method, words, and sympathy will be all directed to inspire confidence, and to ensure the fearless and unhesitating return of the penitent.

In his communications with these penitents, the confessor will necessarily be guided by the circumstances of each case.

1. General admonitions may be given as to caution, self-restraint, and honourable conduct.

2. Special stress should be laid upon the injury and injustice which would be inflicted upon an innocent person by insincerity and deception, and, worse still, by wicked outrage.

3. It must be pointed out, that the passion of love is a strong and fierce fire, which burns with intensity, and that means must be taken to keep it within due bounds.

4. Not only must the usual spiritual means be indicated, but it must be sedulously urged that no impropriety of word or act must be committed,

more especially where the honour, good name, and innocence of another are concerned.

That improper liberties and dangerous overtures are sinful in the sight of God.

That criminal indulgence in this matter not only does not satisfy the unruly, ill-regulated desires and cravings of the body, but actually increases and intensifies them.

That there is no security but in the conventional precautions laid down for all respectable persons. Neither solitude, nor privacy, nor intercourse without witnesses, nor journeys without companions should be tolerated. That, even if no wrong were inflicted under these circumstances, danger would be imminent, and the good name of both would be imperilled.

There will be cases of special personal trial, which will call for sympathy and zeal on the part of the confessor.

Every confessor will be able to point out the terrible nemesis which follows repeated violations of God's law, *hac in re.*

The confessor will compassionately distinguish between malice and frailty, and whilst he may be led to exclaim, *Miseriæ humanæ!* He will also remember, *Misericordiæ Domini!*

Here may be introduced suggestions in regard to persons who relapse again and again into the same grave sins after repeated confessions and repeated promises of amendment. From the general rules laid

down for guidance in all cases, it may be inferred what must be the attitude and conduct of the confessor in dealing with those who are keeping company, whether men or women.

De Recidivis.

In the brief treatment of this important subject, which will be now undertaken, we shall state :—

1. The Church's doctrine as to the essential condition of the Sacrament of Penance.

2. The classification of *Recidivi* as given by theologians.

3. The principles laid down for the guidance of the confessor.

1. The Holy Sacrament of Penance is a sacrament by which the sins, whether mortal or venial, which we have committed after baptism are forgiven.

2. Three conditions are required on the part of the penitent before the priest can validly administer this sacrament, viz., contrition, confession, and satisfaction.

3. Every Catholic layman knows that contrition or sorrow is an essential condition for the remission of sin. So that even were we to suppose a case in which the penitent approached the tribunal of penance without the requisite sorrow and necessary good dispositions, no pardon of sin could be obtained from God, even though the priest should pronounce the words of absolution, unless the confessor could inspire him with true sorrow in the course of the confession.

Two kinds of sorrow.

4. Further, we are taught to understand that there are two kinds of sorrow, perfect sorrow or contrition, and imperfect sorrow or attrition.

5. Perfect sorrow is a detestation of our sins, springing purely from the love of God, with a firm purpose of amendment. This sorrow cancels sin even before the confession, although the obligation of confessing the sin remains.

6. Imperfect sorrow is that sorrow which has for its motive the fear of God's judgments, joined with a resolution to avoid sin and the occasions of sin. This sorrow, along with the priest's absolution, is sufficient for the validity of the sacrament.

We shall now proceed to the examination of the classification of *Recidivi* as given by theologians, and also of the principles laid down for the guidance of confessors.

De Recidivis et Quibusdam Occasionariis— (Ad Confessarios.)

I. CLASSIFICATIO.

Classificatio.

I. Pro majore vel minore difficultate absolutionis dandae ita fere poenitentes in quasdam classes dividere possumus, sc., eorum :—

1. Qui versantur in proxima occasione libera eaque continua ;

2. Qui versati sunt saepius in proxima occasione libera non continua;

3. Qui versantur in proxima occasione continua, sed necessaria;

4. Qui saepius versantur in proxima occasione necessaria non continua;

5. Qui sine externa occasione ex fragilitate interna relapsi sunt.

Principia et solutiones.

Scilicet primi vix unquam absolvi possunt, antequam re ipsa occasionem reliquerint; secundi aliquoties absolvi possunt, si serio promittunt vitare occasionem, neque gravis ratio praejudicii contra eos exsistit; tertii ex parte quidem mitius, ex parte etiam severius tractandi sunt, quam poenitentes secundae classis; nimirum severius saltem exigi debet fidelis mediorum observantia, alioquin differenda est absolutio; quarti adigendi sunt etiam omnino ad adhibenda remedia efficacia: at si tandem dispositi esse videntur, *raro expedit absolutionem differre;* quinti ordinis poenitentes etiam *magis absolutione confortandi sunt,* modo sufficientem dispositionem prae se ferant.

II. Poenitentes, qui remedia a prudenti confessario praescripta serio adhibuerunt, atque aliquamdiu contra vitia pugnaverunt, etsi dein paulo negligentiores evaserint atque iterum relapsi sint, recidivi stricto sensu non censentur; neque propter relapsum ratio est, cur nunc absolutio eis negatur aut differatur, modo

dolorem et absolutam voluntatem non amplius peccandi concipiant.

Verum id circa ejusmodi homines notari debet, esse, qui ex industria unâ alterâve hebdomadâ a confessione peracta, atque etiam ante confessionem denuo instituendam sese continere consueverint, ut sic quaedam signa sincerae voluntatis confessario possint praebere, sed qui post breve illud tempus semper eodem modo relabantur. Quod si accidit, videri omnino debet, utrum vera voluntas absolute abstinendi a peccato adfuerit et adsit, aut potius sola voluntas per aliquod tempus sese continendi. Quae voluntas sine dubio plane insufficiens est ad recipiendam absolutionem: atque hujusmodi homines pleno sensu sunt recidivi.

III. Stricto igitur seu pleno sensu recidivi ii sunt, qui ita sunt relapsi, ut merito inde dubium de dispositione in praeteritis confessionibus colligi debeat. Quo non efficitur quidem, ut repetitio harum confessionum jam pro necessario habeatur; tamen id efficitur, ut iidem homines nunc melius probare debeant praesentem dispositionem.

At qua ratione et quo gradu haec probatio fieri debeat, certa regula definiri non potest. Quo majus praejudicium contra sinceritatem doloris et ejus nudae assertionis ex frequenti relapsu apparet, eo magis insistendum est, ut hoc praejudicium melioribus poenitentiæ signis diluatur. Sed si tandem confessarius sibi dicere prudenter debet non obstante frequenti relapsu, sibi de

sincero dolore et proposito solide persuasum esse; non est, cur absolutio dari nequeat, nisi forte obstet obligatio relinquendae occasionis, faciendae restitutionis, &c., quae prius implenda sit.

Quando igitur talis obligatio exsistit, jam prima vice pro regula sumi potest differendam esse absolutionem, dum poenitens officium suum impleverit, si facilius sit ei redire, quam obligationi suae satisfacere: quod multo magis fieri oportet, si poenitens jam aliquando promissis non stetit; imo si ita est, raro omnino ei fidi debet, antequam re ipsa illi obligationi satisfactum sit. Dico, raro omnino fidi debere; nam aliquando per exceptionem id fieri posse negari non debet, ut si ex una parte poenitens nunc specialia prorsus signa melioris propositi praebet, et ex altera parte gravissimum onus est illi redire, utpote qui longius iter instituerit, vel aliquid simile.

IV. Relapsus si ex occasione externa ortus est aliquando manifestam reddit obligationem auferendi occasionem potius, quam eam per remedia reddendi remotam: si nimirum hoc nimis difficile esse experientia probatum est, neque adeo difficile, quamquam satis onerosum, occasionem removere. Immo etiam quando absolute id imponi nequit propter nimiam difficultatem, tamen si alias unquam, in hoc casu confessarii est omnino videre, nonne debeat differre absolutionem, ut, voluntatem seriam ejus, qui saepius fidem fregerit, experiatur, neque solis promissis, immo nec lacrymis facilius credat confessarius.

Homo vero relapsus *ex interna fragilitate,* si satis dispositus ad recipiendam absolutionem non videtur, potius *omnibus modis ad seriam voluntatem dolendi* et *proponendi induci debet, quam remitti.* Attamen etiam in hoc poenitentium genere accidere potest, ut rigor adhibendus atque absolutio ad aliquod tempus differenda, vel aliquando saltem communio interdicenda sit, si nimirum ex frequenti relapsu cum frequenti susceptione sacramentorum apparet, vel existimari debet, horrorem peccati firmamque voluntatem non amplius peccandi defuisse atque deesse. Si vero relapsus frequentior ex rariore sacramentorum susceptione oriri videtur, ad frequentiorem usum poenitens potius animandus est.

V. Recidivi, etiam si absolvi absolute possunt, tamen aliquando pro remedio ad breve tempus remitti possunt, ut videlicet interim melius de peccati malitia recogitent, atque melius dispositi majorem fructum ex sacramentis hauriant. VERUM HUJUS EXPERIMENTI USUS PRUDENTER OMNINO FIERI DEBET, MAXIME NOSTRIS TEMPORIBUS, quibus qualibet difficultate homines infirmi á sacramentis retrahantur. Immo meminisse juvat dicti S. Alphonsi, TUNC POSSE POENITENTEM ETIAM DUBIE DISPOSITUM, MODO TAMEN IPSE PUTET SE DISPOSITUM ESSE, SUB CONDITIONE ABSOLVI, SI PRUDENTER TIMEATUR, QUOD PECCATOR ILLE NON AMPLIUS AD CONFESSIONEM REDIBIT, ET IN PECCATIS SUIS TABESCET; l. 6. n. 432.

De Consuetudinariis et Recidivis.

1. Consuetudinarius, prout distinguitur a recidivo, juxta recentiores dicitur ille, qui contraxit habitum alicujus peccati, in quod tamen nondum post confessionem sit relapsus. Recidivus vero vocatur ille, qui habitum contraxit, et post confessionem in idem peccatum relabitur. S. Lig., n. 457 (*a.*)

2. Gury has definitiones tribuit Recentioribus, quia reipsa tantum recentiorum quorumdam fuit ejusmodi inter CONSUETUDINARIUM et RECIDIVUM distinctio, ut prior dicatur, qui habitum contraxit alicujus peccati, quod nondum confessus sit (addunt habitum contrahi per actum quinquies in mense repetitum) alter vero, qui post confessionem in eadem peccata relapsus fuerit. Quae quidem sensu aliquo admitti forte poterunt, sicut et quod RECIDIVUS appelletur, qui post confessionem in peccatum etiam diversae speciei relabatur, ut cum nonnullis voluit quidam Franzoia. Verum THEOLOGICA ACCEPTIONE INTELLIGITUR A DOCTORIBUS, FREQUENS REINCIDENTIA IN EADEM PECCATA POST MULTAS CONFESSIONES ABSQUE ULLA EMENDATIONE ut ait Card. De Lugo (*De Poenit Disp.* 14, *n.* 166) vel ut habent Salmanticenses (*Fr.* 17, *Cap.* 2, *n.* 167). QUAESTIO EST DE EO, QUI SAEPIUS ADMONITUS IN EODEM SEMPER STATU PERMANET, NIHIL EX PARTE SUA CURAE APPONENDO UT AD MELIOREM FRUGEM REDEAT. Et Gobat (*Theol. Experim. Tract* 7, *Cas* 16, *n.* 518) QUANDO THEOLIGI MORALES TRACTANT DE RECIDIVIS . . .

loquuntur solum de iis recidivis qui idem peccatum mortale pergunt committere etiam post propositum emendationis, postque plures confessiones, ut exprimit Ioann. Sanchez, Lugo, Lessius, Filliuccius. Et Ven. P. Segneri (*Crist Istr. p.* 3, *disc* 22), Intendo di ragionare d'un'altra razza di recidivi, e sono coloro che dopo la confessione tornano subito alla medesima colpa senza veruna emendazione e senza veruno studio per emendarsi. Et Ludovicus a Granata eosdem describit, qui ubi scelera sua hoc tempore confessi fuerint, in eadem protinus relabuntur neque de prava consuetudine et licentia jurandi, perjerandi, mentiendi, detrahendi, maledicendi, maleprecandi, atque concupiscendi quidquam remittunt, nec ullum virtutis ac pietatis officium amplectuntur, sed iidem permanent, qui autea fuerant. Ita sanctissimus vir apud Audreucci, qui ex sententia communi, D.D. (*In Opusc Confessarius Recidiv.* § 1 *in Appen. ad Vol. II., Medullae Busembaum. Romae*, 1844. *Typ., Prop. Fid*) tria haec ad recidivum acceptione theologica constituendum requiri colligit :—

1. Frequentem relapsum post plures confessiones ;

2. Relapsum in eadem specie peccata ;

3. Defectum omnis, etiam inchoatae, emendationis.

Illud etiam addendum est, quod si Confessarius poenitentem reperiat fragilem adeo atque

ETIAM INCONSTANTEM IN MEDIIS ADHIBENDIS, UT EUM MINUS DISPOSITUM AD ABSOLUTIONEM OB DEFECTUM EFFICACIS PROPOSITI JUDICARE DEBEAT, ADHUC IMPRUDENTER AB HOMINE TAM FRAGILI, INFIRMO, ET IMBECILLO ID EXIGET, QUOD DIFFICILIUS AC MORALITER IMPOSSIBILE ILLI EST; MULTOQUE IMPRUDENTIUS RIGIDE AC DURE EUM A SE REIICIET; SIC ENIM HOC UNICE CONSEQUETUR, UT POENITENS DESPERABUNDUS PECCATIS PROFUNDIUS IMMERGATUR. CONTRA VERO CHARITAS, BENIQUITAS, ET PATIENTIA IN EO SAEPE EXCIPIENDO, ET AUDIENDO HOC SALTEM OBTINEBIT, UT NEC PENITUS DIABOLO DESERATUR, NEC MEDIA AC PRECES OMNINO ABIICIAT, NEC VIA ILLI PRAECIDATUR, QUA CONSILIIS ET HORTATIONIBUS JUVARI POSSIT, ADITUMQUE AD RECONCILIATIONEM SCIAT SEMPER SIBI FACILEM PATERE; prouti scilicet Doctores agendum monent ubi disserunt de confessionibus meretricis, usurarii, aliorumque hujusmodi, qui non sunt sufficienter dispositi, sed emendationis seu melioris vitae desiderium aliquod minus efficax, seu velleitatem tantum habent. Nec sane in casu oblivisci confessarius debet sententiam, qua Suarezius (*De Relig., Tr.* 5. *Lib.* 3, *c.* 8, *n.* 7) DE HOC ARGUMENTO CONCLUDIT: NEC HUJUSMODI HUMANAE INFIRMITATES EFFICACIUS CURARI AB HOMINE POSSUNT.*

* Ballerini in Gury Theol. Moral, Vol. II., De Pomtentiâ.

CHAPTER XVI.

Synopsis of Replies to Question V.

Previous suggestions applicable here—Special difficulties of mixed company keeping—Need of caution and discrimination on the part of the confessor—Special efforts in regard to the Catholic party—Desirability of an interview with the non-Catholic party for the purpose of instruction—In case of unwillingness to join the Church—Confessor to obtain satisfactory proofs as to baptism—Important decisions of the S. Cong. as to baptism of non-Catholics—Confessor cautiously to ascertain views of non-Catholic as to the marriage tie—Important teaching of Ballerini and De Lugo on the subject of valid intention—Forms of promise and conditions to be signed by both parties to a mixed marriage—Form of application for dispensation—Form of dispensation—Method of reception and baptism of a convert.

V. What must he do with those who are keeping company with Protestants?

The suggestions which have already been made as to company keeping in general, and the special counsel offered both in the case of boys and girls, will be equally applicable to the phase of "mixed" company-keeping.

But, in addition to the precautions and admonitions already prescribed, there are now special circumstances to be considered.

The case of Catholics keeping company with Protestants are varied, and have their own special difficulties.

The confessor, knowing as he well does the grave objection to all mixed marriages, even under the most favourable circumstances, will naturally receive with regret the news of other prospective "mixed unions."

Still, however much he may think it prudent to denounce mixed marriages in the pulpit or at the altar, he will, nevertheless, be cautious, gentle, and discriminating in the tribunal of penance, when dealing with individual cases.

Had he been consulted before the formation of the acquaintance, the opportunity for the display of his eloquence and zeal might have enabled him to prevent the alliance.

Parents and others have now incurred responsibility for the attachment. He is not answerable for the engagement already formed, and although he may tentatively endeavour to ascertain how far the parties are pledged, and may use his discretion as to the efforts to be made to dissuade them from marriage, still if the engagement be really made, or if a deep attachment be formed, or if, unfortunately, liberties have been allowed or taken, and there be possible danger of loss of fame, remonstrance would not only be injudicious but in vain.

The confessor in this case will kindly and gently,

but impressively, explain that whilst a dispensation may, under certain conditions, be obtained for the marriage, and that whilst the Catholic party may have the consolation both of the sacraments and of the licit celebration of the marriage, still that it is all-important to understand that the reasons for the Church's grave objection to such marriages continue to exist, and must be borne in mind by the penitent through life.

The confessor will kindly exhort the penitent to make an earnest and determined resolution to take all the possible means to lessen the evils attending a mixed marriage, and to counteract all the adverse influences which are likely to exist, by earnest prayer, faithful observance of the laws of the Church, and by the diligent and devout frequentation of the sacraments.

Patience and kindness will be found in most cases to have a powerful influence over the penitent. Docility and readiness to comply with exhortations will invariably be the response, and the penitent will remember through life the good advice kindly tendered.

Interviews with the non-Catholic party may be suggested. Oftentimes such interviews lead to good results.

If, however, no hopes of good results are to be entertained, then it must be explained that the Church requires a guarantee and written promise for the fulfilment of certain prescribed conditions laid down in the case of all mixed marriages, as the indispensable condition for the marriage.

Upon the assurance given by the non-Catholic party of the acceptance and fulfilment of these conditions, the necessary dispensation may be applied for.

The Catholic party may be well advised to use every means in his or her power to bring about (after marriage) the conversion of the non-Catholic party, and to pray unceasingly for the light of faith and for the grace of conversion.

Baptism. Intention of the non-Catholic.

A very important matter for the confessor, as well as for the priest in charge of the marriage, is the question of the baptism of the non-Catholic party; as also the nature of the intention of the non-Catholic party in reference to the indissolubility of marriage.

1. It will be remembered that marriage is a sacramental contract; that there can be no valid contract of marriage, which is not, at the same time, sacramental. Marriage, therefore, as a mere natural contract, has no longer place in the Church of Christ, since the divine institution of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Either the marriage is a sacramental contract or it is invalid—that is, null and void, and the parties to the contract in such a case remain unmarried.

The Question and Difficulty as to the Doubtful Baptism of the Non-Catholic Party in a Proposed Mixed Marriage.

As by a diriment impediment marriage between a Catholic and an unbaptized person is invalid, and, as

in this country the ministers of many sects do not believe in the necessity of baptism, and consequently may omit something essential to its validity, it becomes a matter of necessity, in the interests of both parties, to have good reason for ascertaining the baptism of the non-Catholic party. If, however, the invalidity of the baptism should not be discovered until after the marriage, then it will be necessary to have recourse to the Pope for a dispensation.

How to Determine the Validity of Baptism in Non-Catholics.

IMPORTANT DECISIONS OF THE ROMAN CONGREGATION, AUGUST, 1883.

Priests are often called upon to determine the validity of baptism, especially in the case of mixed marriages, where the validity of the marriage may depend upon the validity of the baptism.

The following questions from the Bishop of Savannah were proposed to and answered by the Sacred Congregation of the Inquisition :—

1. If the parents of the non-Catholic party belonged to a sect which did not acknowledge the necessity of baptism, then baptism is not to be presumed.

2. If the parents of the non-Catholic party belonged to a sect which does not recognise infant baptism, or in which baptism is not administered except in the

case of adults, *e.g.*, who are thirty years of age, baptism is not to be presumed.

3. If the parents of the non-Catholic party, when alive, professed that they belonged to no religious sect, but that they worshipped the Supreme Being by good lives rather than by any special religious rite, baptism is not to be presumed.

4. If, however, the parents were but tepid and indifferent members of the sect, or if they belonged to a sect which did not, indeed, repudiate baptism, but did not regard it as necessary, nor, indeed, ordinarily secured its administration, then is baptism to be presumed in either or both cases or not?

5. If one of the parents only belonged to a sect which recognised baptism, and was a zealous member of it, and the presumption should be in favour of baptism; and in the education of the children that parent undoubtedly had taken the chief part, then baptism is to be presumed.

(*a*) The same is to be said if after inquiry has been made, it should not be known, or it does not appear to be satisfactorily proved, whether such parent did take the principal part because baptism is to be presumed, since marriage, once entered upon, is to be considered valid until an impediment should be discovered.

(*b*) But what is to be said if it be certainly ascertained that the parent who took the principal part in the education of the children was not disposed in favour of

baptism, whilst the sect and disposition of the other were favourable to baptism?

6. In a case where the presumption does not lead to the supposition that baptism was conferred, the rule is to be applied which says:—the fact is not to be presumed, but to be proved.

In answer to the first, the reply is affirmatively, provided that inquiry is made in each case.

In answer to the second, that is whether, as long as it cannot be ascertained whether baptism was administered, the principle of presumption as to the validity of marriage already contracted would be rightly applied in the following cases?—

They replied affirmatively with regard to the first, second, and third cases, and also with regard to the first part of the fourth, and the first part of the fifth; but in this last case (*5a*), let there be added after the words "had the principal part," that the other married partner had no certain knowledge that baptism was not conferred, then baptism is to be presumed.

With regard to the other cases mentioned in the second part of number five, recourse is to be had to the Holy See, with a full exposition of all the circumstances of persons, places, and things, in connection with the case.

In answer to the sixth. The answer has been already anticipated in the foregoing replies.—S.R. et Universalis Inquisit., Aug. 1, 1883.

Question and Difficulty as to Valid Intention.

The next matter of importance already alluded to, regards the view and intention of the non-Catholic in reference to Christian marriage.

If indissolubility be an essential condition of the validity of the sacramental contract, then the sacramental contract will be invalid, if made by one of the parties with the positive intention of not accepting the essential condition of indissolubility and with the express reservation of the right of future separation and divorce.

Prudence is needed here, in the interest of both parties. Kindness and patience may enable the priest so to instruct the non-Catholic as to induce him to accept the Church's teaching, *hic et nunc*, and to consent to the necessary conditions for the validity of the Sacrament. Change of mind or conduct hereafter, will not invalidate the Sacrament, although it may inflict injury on the Catholic party.

The question of difficulty as to the valid intention and true consent of the non-Catholic party to a mixed marriage is ably discussed by Ballerini and De Lugo, Gury, Vol. II., De Mat.

Living, as we do, in a country where the civil law acknowledges the right of divorce under certain circumstances, it is of importance to secure from the non-Catholic party, previous to marriage, an acceptance of the conditions necessary for the valid reception of the

Sacrament of Matrimony, and his or her consent to the marriage for life, notwithstanding any future cause whatever, of offence or crime on either side.

If, however, it be asked what is to be thought of the validity of mixed marriages contracted, or to be contracted hereafter without such precaution on the part of the priest, we reply that indissolubility belongs to the essence of the Sacrament of Marriage.

Any celebration of marriage in which the non-Catholic actually and deliberately intends secretly, or declares expressly, the exclusion of this essential condition from his consent to the marriage contract, becomes, *ipso facto*, null and void, and no sacramental contract is in reality effected.

This case is very clear and intelligible. But very different is the case of those persons, who, living in this country, and knowing of the law of divorce, and yet in ignorance and inadvertence as to the essential condition of Christian marriage, consent to the contract without excluding from their mind and consent this condition, and although apprised of the legal possibility of divorce, nevertheless do not limit their intention in reference to the law, and are so disposed that if they had been apprised of the necessity of indissolubility, would have rather accepted the conditions than have foregone the marriage, then the marriage would be presumed to be valid. Cardinal De Lugo (De Sacro Disp. 8, n. 131-132) thus explains this two-fold case. If, he says, the married parties know that by the laws

of their country divorce is sanctioned, but at the time of the contract do not expressly state their intention of not binding themselves except in accordance with that limitation, then if this knowledge of the law of divorce was antecedent to the marriage in the sense that they only intended to marry under this condition,—and would not have married except on that condition,—they evidently did not intend to bind themselves for life, and consequently the marriage would be void.

If, however, the contracting parties were entirely ignorant as to the indissolubility of marriage, or even if they thought that the nuptial union could be dissolved, and nevertheless did not at the time of the contract limit their intention to this view of marriage, but had the general wish and intention of contracting a valid marriage, so that they would rather have contracted the marriage, than have maintained the view of divorce, then the marriage would appear to be valid.

Conditions for a Mixed Marriage.

Conditions of a Mixed Marriage.

The pastor will point out to both parties the number and nature of the conditions without which the marriage cannot be sanctioned, and will judiciously arrange for an immediate interview with the non-Catholic party, with a view to explain these conditions, and to obtain the promise of their fulfilment.

It will be explained that the Church requires two solemn promises to be made by the contracting parties, before her ministers are allowed to sanction, or be present at the celebration of their marriage.

In the first place, each of the contracting parties is required not only to make the following promise, but to sign it, in the presence of a witness.

FORM OF PROMISE TO BE SIGNED BY BOTH PARTIES.

Baptism of Children.

We, the undersigned, do hereby, each of us, solemnly promise and engage that all the children of both sexes, who may be born of our marriage, shall be baptised in the Catholic Church, and shall be carefully brought up in the knowledge and practice of the Catholic Religion.

Date

Signatures.

Promise to allow Religious Liberty.

The second promise is required to be made by the non-Catholic party alone: He is solemnly pledged to allow his wife religious liberty.

FORM TO BE SIGNED BY THE NON-CATHOLIC PARTY.

I, the undersigned, hereby solemnly promise and engage, that I will not interfere with the religious belief of (N), my future (wife or husband), nor with (his or her) full and perfect liberty to fulfil all (his or her) duties as a Catholic.

Date

Signature.

The printed document upon which are written these signatures contains also a form of certificate to be signed by the officiating priest. He declares that he has obtained the requisite dispensation, and secured the observance of all the regulations of the Church, and that the marriage has been celebrated in conformity with its laws.

Deposited in the Archives of the Diocese.

This document is then forwarded to the Bishop, in whose care it remains, safely deposited in the archives of the diocese.

This explanation, if made to the parties concerned, will be likely to impress both of them with the reality and the solemnity of these exacted conditions and serious engagements, and will be calculated to ensure their future observance.

Form of Application for Dispensation in a case of Mixed Marriage.

Most Reverend Lord,

The priest in charge of the Church of , in , humbly begs your Lordship to benignly deign to grant a dispensation, in order that N., a Catholic, of , may lawfully marry N., a non-Catholic, having due observance of the terms of the instruction of the Holy Office, 17th February, 1864, in reference to not appearing before a Protestant minister, and having previously arranged for the publication of the usual three proclamations of banns, in which no mention shall be

made of the religion of the contracting parties. Cong. Holy Office, 11th May, 1864, and 19th September, 1865.

Both parties have promised that they will undertake to see that all the children which may be born unto them, both males and females, shall be baptised according to the ritual of the Catholic Church, and be brought up in the Catholic faith.

Moreover, the non-Catholic party promises that he will grant full liberty to the Catholic party to practice her holy religion. Further, the Catholic party promises to use every endeavour to induce the non-Catholic to embrace the true faith.

Since it is well known to your petitioner that the aforesaid triple promise by no means suffices for the lawful celebration of a mixed marriage, but that, furthermore, just and weighty reasons are absolutely needed (14 Council of Westminster, p. 152; recent edit., 316), he begs with all respect and humility to offer to your lordship, in explanation, the following grave reasons :—

The day of 18

Signed Rector (or Miss. Apostol).

Here are added, either in Latin or English, the full and detailed reasons proper to the case.

Amongst the reasons which, according to theologians, are commonly alleged, the following are enumerated :—

Fear of apostacy, necessity, utility, the special personal

claims of the petitioner's age; scandal; the great advantages offered, future benefits, hopes, and anticipation, piety, compassion; circumstances of the case, and the narrow limits of the district.

All these points are fully discussed by theologians and commentators upon the sacred canons. Amongst them may be consulted with profit, Pyrrhus Corradus, Praxis dispensationum Apostolicarum Lib. VII. and VIII.; Et Vincentius De Justis dispensationbus Matrimonii Lib. III.

N.B.—Since it belongs to the Bishop alone to judge and decide whether the alleged reasons for the dispensation are sufficient or not, the priest must be most sedulous and cautious not to allow the parties to give in their names to the Registrar, nor to publish the banns, or to give any intimation of the concession of a dispensation until he shall have obtained the official document which removes the impediment.

Form of Dispensation for a Mixed Marriage.

N.,

By the Grace of God, and by the favour of the Apostolic See,

Bishop of N.

Making use of the extraordinary powers granted to us, on the day of , 18 , for the space of two years by our Most Holy and Sovereign Lord Leo, by the grace God, P.P. XIII., having due regard to the reasons

laid before us, grant, in the Lord, a dispensation for the mixed marriage, so that, notwithstanding the difference of religion, N., the Catholic, may be lawfully married to N., the non-Catholic, provided that the threefold promise shall have been properly obtained, viz., 1st, that on the part of the Catholic, as well as on the part of the non-Catholic, that all the children of both sexes shall be brought up in the holy faith and practice of the Catholic religion; and 2nd, on the part of the non-Catholic, that liberty of worship shall be accorded to the Catholic party; and 3rd, on the part of the Catholic, every effort shall be employed to ensure the conversion of the non-Catholic.

Let, however, the solemnities and the Nuptial Blessing be omitted, and let all the prescribed regulations in reference to mixed marriages be observed, which are particularly laid down in the Instr. of the H. Office, 17th February, 1864.

Given at our residence, day of , 188 .

Signed,

Signed, *Sec.*

CERTIFICATE OF THE PRIEST WHO HAS OFFICIATED AT THE MARRIAGE.

I, , certify that the marriage between the aforesaid parties was celebrated before me, in virtue of the present dispensation, in the Church of , at ; that all the promises were duly made and signed, and

all the presented conditions and regulations were observed, on the day of , 188 .

Signed,

Officiating Priest.

N.B.—After the marriage, this paper is to be returned without delay to the Secretary, Bishop's House, Salford.

Form returned and deposited in the Archives on the day of , 188 .

Signed,

Archivist.

Mixed Marriages—Marriage Ceremonies.

In the celebration of Catholic marriages take care that the holy ceremonial prescribed in the Ritual *Ritus celebrandi Sacramentum Matrimonii* be, as far as possible and according to lawful usage, observed.

With regard to the solemn blessing to be received in Holy Mass (nuptial Mass), those about to contract marriage are not to be compelled, but are to be earnestly exhorted to prepare for its reception. (Decree of the Council of Westminster).

The Rite to be Observed in a Mixed Marriage.

If a mixed marriage be contracted with the prescribed conditions, and with the dispensation of the Church, not even then was it formerly conceded to the parish priest to receive the consent of the parties to be married in the presence of two witnesses, except in

some place outside the Church, and then without any sacred rite or ceremony whatever.

Pius IX., however, in later times (Lit. Encycl. 1853), made a concession :—

That if the bishops in certain places knew that these conditions could not be fulfilled without greater loss and scandal arising, then in this case (*servandis servatis*), the rite prescribed in the Diocesan Ritual might be tolerated, but that the celebration of the nuptial Mass was never to be allowed. (Lehmkuhl, Theol., Vol. II.)

Series of Papal Enactments as to the Validity of Mixed Marriages.

Benedict XIV., in reference to Belgium and Holland, November 4th, 1741, declares to be valid all mixed marriages contracted in those countries, between baptised persons, without conformity to the Decree of Clandestinity of the Council of Trent, if no other canonical impediment exists, but nevertheless in accordance with the laws of those countries.

Pius VIII. and Gregory XVII. made similar declarations in reference to Austria and Germany, under the pressure of great and pressing dangers.

Pius VI. authorised the priest in the Austrian States, and later in the Duchy of Cleves, to allow a mixed marriage to take place in his presence, in accordance with the prescription of the Council of

Trent, in the case of Catholic marriages. The proclamation of banns, however, was forbidden, and the marriage was to be contracted outside the Church, and the conditions were to be exacted.

Proclamation of Banns Forbidden.

Pius VII. persisted in remaining inflexible, in not allowing mixed marriages to be contracted without a Papal dispensation, or by Papal faculties, and this only when the condition of educating the children in the Catholic Faith was assured.

Pius VIII., after a long resistance, granted by a brief *Litteris altero*, 25th March, 1830, addressed to the Archbishop of Cologne, Treves, Padderborn, Munster, that when every effort had failed in inducing the Catholic bride to consent to fulfil the conditions, and particularly the last, the priest might nevertheless publish the banns, allow the marriage to be contracted in his presence, but not in the Church—*in loco non sacro*—without any religious ceremony, and generally without any act which might lead to the supposition that such a marriage had the approbation of the Church. At the same time he was permitted to register the marriage as valid. Further, mixed marriages contracted without the observance of the prescriptions of the Council of Trent, and consequently, not in the presence of a Catholic priest, were (if not otherwise defective) to be recognised as true and valid marriages.

Gregory XVI. applied to Bavaria the same decision as to the publication of banns and certificate of attestation, as well as to the passive assistance of the priest and the insertion of the marriage in the register, in case of pressing danger, and to avoid greater evil. These regulations were extended to the German-Austrian States and to Hungary.

The difference of religion not to be mentioned in the proclamation of banns.

It may be here remarked that in the publication of banns it is not allowed to mention the difference of religion.

Thus we have the extreme concession which the Church could make, under embarrassing circumstances, and under pressure, brought to bear by governments pleading in favour of mixed marriages.

Pius IX., in an Instruction dated the 15th November, 1858, and addressed to all the archbishops and bishops, gives the following directions:—

That if it be wisely and gravely judged to be expedient, under exceptional circumstances, they might allow, in an extreme case, in the celebration of mixed marriage, the use of the ceremony prescribed in the Roman Ritual, always excepting the celebration of the nuptial Mass.

The Method of Receiving a Convert into the Church, as in the Case of the Previous Conversion of one of the Parties to an approaching Marriage.

However much the priest may desire the conversion of all non-Catholics, it will generally be found in practice, that the reception of such persons immediately before marriage is attended with many difficulties.

1. The time is inopportune, and frequently too short for instruction.

2. Sincerity and earnestness may be wanting, and there is frequently no time to test the dispositions.

3. The necessarily defective instruction given before marriage, is not generally supplied afterwards.

4. The pastor cannot but be filled with anxiety whilst engaged in the instruction of one who is about to make so important a change as that of religion, and upon whom so much depends in the future, and whilst conscious of the deficiency of his present instruction and of the difficulty of subsequent instruction.

In most cases the pastor finds himself obliged to be satisfied with such interviews and with such opportunities as may be possible before marriage.

The most that he can frequently accomplish, is to impart that knowledge of religion which is deemed sufficient for an uneducated person *(homo rudis)*, and such elementary instruction as may be deemed sufficient

for preparation for the Sacraments of Baptism, Holy Communion (if practicable), and Matrimony.

When it is possible, and in cases where sufficient time is allowed, a systematic course of instruction should be given, according to the rubric which enjoins that "instruction" should precede the administration of the Sacrament of Baptism *(secundum apostolicam regulam)*, according to the ancient discipline of the Church. In the Primitive Church, as is well known, all adult candidates for baptism were obliged to receive a certain course of instruction in Christian doctrine, from which such persons were called *catechumens*—*i.e.*, persons under instruction. Usually catechumens remained under instruction two or three years, according to the directions drawn up for the use of the missionaries of the Propaganda.

Catechumens.

The time of the instruction and preparation of catechumens should not, as a rule, be less than forty days.

If it be asked what amount of religious knowledge should an adult about to be married possess before admission to baptism, it may be replied that a distinction is generally made (although not necessary here) between those in danger of death and those not so circumstanced. The congregation (1703) decided that even a person in danger of death *(etiam moribundus si capax)* must be taught all the doctrines necessary to be known, *necessitate medii*—*i.e.*, the existence of God, the mysteries of the Blessed Trinity, and of the Incar-

nation, as also the essential things to be known in reference to baptism and penance. Missionarium teneri adulto etiam moribundo, qui incapax non sit, explicare mysteria fidei quae sunt necessaria necessitate medii ut sunt praecipue mysteria Trinitatis et Incarnationis.

All other adult converts must know, at least in substance, according to their capacity, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Commandments, and the Catholic doctrine regarding the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance and Holy Eucharist, which they have to receive. Moreover, it is necessary to explain with emphasis the Divinely constituted authority of the Church, together with the obligation of implicit faith in all that it teaches.

The method of instruction will vary with different persons, and with different circumstances. It will be found safe and prudent to require every adult candidate to obtain a familiarity with the Catechism during the time that a course of instruction is being given.

Baptism.

After the necessary instruction has been imparted, the question of baptism arises.

To what sect has this candidate belonged? Was baptism valued and rightly administered by those belonging to it?

If, after inquiry, it be found that there is certain evidence that previous baptism was not administered,

then baptism must be administered absolutely, and in the Salford Diocese, by a special decree 1867, the form of infant baptism must be used.

If, however, there be the absence of clear and undoubted evidence, then conditional baptism must be administered. An order was issued by the Vicars Apostolic of this country at the beginning of the present century, and was confirmed by the Council of Westminster in 1852, to the effect that "*All converts from Protestantism born after 1773 should be conditionally baptised.*" The Synod of Thurles decreed the same; as also the Provincial Synod of Baltimore in 1860, the Provincial Council of Halifax in 1857.

The Westminster Synod decreed that conditional baptism is not to be given publicly but quite privately, with holy water and without ceremonies. Hujusmodi baptismus non fiat publice sed omnino privatim cum aqua lustrali et absque cœremoniis. Baptism of this kind, therefore, has to be administered quite privately. It may be a matter of opinion as to the feasibility of introducing sponsors, but it will be agreed by all that prudence will counsel the presence of witnesses to prove the baptism.

Order to be Observed.

I. The candidate for baptism should make a previous profession of faith.

The form of profession prescribed is the creed of

Pius IV., or the abridgment of it, sanctioned by the Sacred Congregation for the American clergy.

In dealing with the poorer class of people, it may be considered sufficient to elicit from them, by questions, such a profession of faith in the principal mysteries of religion, and in the divine authority of the Church, as may be deemed suitable for such persons.

1. The convert must make a sacramental confession.

Confessio etiam sacramentalis semper in tali casu exigenda. Conc. West.

2. Conditional baptism will be administered.

3. Conditional absolution will be given.

In reference to this confession, it may be observed that the following is the approved practice.

(*a*) To induce the candidate for baptism to make a confession previous to baptism.

(*b*) Then to administer conditional baptism, cum aqua lustrali.

(*c*) Afterwards to return to the confessional, and give conditional absolution.

II. There remains the question in reference to the absolution to be given from excommunication, *absolutio a censuris in foro externo.*

1. To incur a censure, a person must be a subject of the Church.

2. The person must be contumacious.

3. Now, it is possible that a candidate for baptism may be already validly baptised, and also may have been formally guilty of heresy.

It is the practice to deal with all converts from heretical sects as if they had incurred the reserved excommunication. This seems also to be the view of the Holy Office, for, in the instruction de neo-conversorum receptione given to the American clergy on the 20th of July, 1859, they are directed to absolve the convert a censuris before baptising him, after having received his profession of faith. If they doubt whether the convert have incurred the reserved censures, they must insert the word "forsan." In dubio gravi aut levi, an pœnitens excommunicationem incurrerit per hœresim professam sacerdos hic inserat vocabulum "forsan."

CHAPTER XVII.

Brief Summary of Ecclesiastical Impediments.

Power of the Church to make and abrogate impediments—Power to dispense—Principal impediments enumerated and explained—Error—Violence—Present Marriage—Absence of Baptism—Relationship:—1. Natural. 2. Spiritual—Affinity—Crime.

Right of the Church to constitute impediments.

That the Catholic and Roman Church has power—and that of inherent and inalienable divine right, of which she cannot be deprived, and which she cannot resign—to constitute impediments which shall be antecedently subversive of the matrimonial contract, is of faith, and was defined by the Council of Trent.

The possession of this power follows also from the fact that the matrimonial contract is itself the Sacrament of Matrimony. Now, whatever concerns the Sacraments and their administration, and the determination of their validity and lawfulness, belongs to the Church of God, and not to the civil ruler. Moreover, when a Sacrament consists in a contract with which it is identified, and from which it is consequently inseparable, it belongs to the same Church to determine the necessary conditions for the validity as well as for

the lawfulness of that contract, and so to determine who are capable and who are not capable of making it.

This is, in other words, to determine what are and what are not impediments to the contract, and whether these impediments are merely hindrances to its lawfulness or are antecedently subversive of its validity.

Dispensing power of the Church.

Included in this power, which belongs to the Church and her alone, is the power to abrogate such impediments as she has created, or to dispense, so that in particular cases they should no longer be impediments. Such dispensations require a cause, but of the adequateness of the cause, or of the lawfulness and advantage of the dispensations, she herself must necessarily be the sole judge.*

The consideration of the large and important subject of Ecclesiastical Impediments to Marriage, does not properly fall within the scope and limits of this little treatise. Still, as it has been necessary to refer to some of them, it may be expected that a brief statement should be made in reference to the more important ecclesiastical enactments on this subject.

Since the contract of marriage belongs to the jurisdiction of the Church, it must, of necessity, be determined by certain ecclesiastical laws, just as other natural contracts are regulated by the laws of the State.

* Christian Marriage. Rev. Fr. Humphry, S.J.

The principal laws which affect the persons who are parties to the contract of marriage, are the laws which refer to the impediments to marriage.

Ecclesiastical impediments are of two kinds:—

1. Impedientia, or prohibiting.
2. Dirimentia, or invalidating.

The first class of impediments renders marriage unlawful.

The second class of impediments renders marriage null and void, *i.e.*, invalid.

I. Impediments Prohibiting Marriage, *i.e.*, Rendering Marriage Unlawful.

1. Ecclesiæ vetitum, or prohibition of the Church.
2. Tempus vetitum, or proscribed times and seasons.
3. Sponsalia, or formal engagement to marry.
4. Votum, or vow of chastity.

Ecclesiæ vetitum.

With regard to the first impediment, Ecclesiæ vetitum, or prohibition of the Church, it will be sufficient to indicate the "general prohibitions."

1. Celebration of marriage without the proclamation of banns.

2. Celebration of marriage by minors, without their parents' knowledge and consent.

3. Mixed marriages.

The second impediment, Tempus, or proscribed times or seasons, is known to all Catholics, and is understood to signify that the Church has, for good and sufficient reasons, declared that the observance of solemnities in the celebration of marriage, at certain seasons of the year, would be ill-timed and inopportune. Accordingly, at certain specified times in the year, the celebration of marriage is discouraged; and all solemnity of ceremonial is proscribed. The Nuptial Blessing, as well as all external display of pageantry, public demonstrations of festive mirth, and special wedding banquets are forbidden.

The prohibited times during which marriage may not be celebrated are :—

Tempus. 1. The holy season of Advent until the feast of the Epiphany.

2. The holy season of Lent until Low Sunday, inclusive.

The third impediment is *Sponsalia,* or a formal engagement to marry.

The law of the Church on this matter has been already stated.

The fourth impediment has reference to simple vows of chastity.

Simple vows. The vows which render marriage *unlawful* but not *invalid,* are the following simple vows :—

1. A vow of celibacy.

2. A vow of virginity.
3. A vow of perpetual chastity.
4. A vow of receiving Holy Orders; or,
5. A vow of entering a religious order.

II. Impediments which render Marriage null and void—*i.e.*, Invalid.

The power of declaring these important impediments belongs exclusively to the Church. These ecclesiastical laws bind the faithful at all times, and cannot be presumed to be suspended either on account of grave inconvenience, or on account of the ignorance of those who desire to contract marriage.

These "invalidating" impediments are numerous, and form a very important part of the Treatise on Matrimony.

Summary of the chief impediments.

It has been already said that it does not fall within the scope of this little volume to consider and explain each and every one of the impediments to marriage. Only a few, therefore, of the more important and serious invalidating impediments will be selected and briefly dwelt upon. In the meantime the names of all may be found enumerated in the following lines:—

Names of the greater ecclesiastical impediments.

Error, conditio, votum, cognatio, crimen,
Cûltus disparitas, vis, ordo, ligamen, honestas,
Aetas, affinis, si clandestinus, et impos

Raptave sit mulier nec loco reddita tuto
Hæc socianda vetant connubia facta retractant.

Several of these impediments are founded on the natural law, and are merely confirmed by the Church. Some have reference to individual rights, whilst others have for their object the preservation of public morality.

The following explanatory cases will illustrate the meaning of the words above indicated :—

1. A marriage would be invalid if one of the persons to the contract should be deceived as to the identity of the other party. If, in other words, the wrong person was presented for acceptation.

2. Force or violence, or excessive fear, which deprives one of the parties to a marriage of the liberty requisite for free consent to the contract, would invalidate the marriage.

Ligamen, *i.e.*, existing marriage.

3. Similarly persons already married are not permitted to marry again. A marriage attempted by one of the parties during the lifetime of the other would be null and void.

Vota, *i.e.*, solemn vows.

4. A marriage would be invalid if one of the parties to the contract had taken solemn vows, either as an ecclesiastic on receiving holy orders, or as a religious making a solemn profession in a religious order.

5. Absence of baptism in one of the parties to a marriage would render its celebration invalid.

6. Special attention may now be called to the important impediments of relationship which render marriage unlawful and invalid.

This impediment known as relationship is of three kinds, only two of which require notice :—

I. Natural or blood relationship; ties of kindred.

II. Spiritual relationship, arising from the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.

Blood Relationship.

I. Natural or blood relationship is that kinship which arises between persons who descend from a common ancestry. A distinction is is made between relationship springing from *lineal* descent, which is ever an invalidating impediment, and the relationship which is considered according to the number of degrees or removes from a common ancestor by *lateral* descent.

Marriage between cousins forbidden.

It will be sufficient here, for all practical purposes, to state that the Church forbids marriage between persons related in the first four degrees of relationship; that is, between persons who are related either as first, second, or third cousins, and, as a matter of course, between all persons who may be still more closely related.

This prohibition has been made for wise reasons. It would be well if the gravity of these reasons were always understood and appreciated, so that persons who are so nearly related to each other as first, second,

or third cousins would not contemplate an union which experience proves to be so very undesirable.

II. *Spiritual relationship* is another invalidating impediment, and arises from the administration of the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.

Spiritual Relationship.

This spiritual relationship will be found to exist between

1. The ministers of the sacrament and the recipients of the sacrament.

2. The ministers of the sacrament and the parents of the recipients.

3. The godfather or godmother and the recipient.

4. The godfather and mother of the recipient.

The godmother and father of the recipient.

On the other hand, *no* relationship arises between

(*a*) The priest and sponsors; nor between

(*b*) The sponsors.

III. An invalidating impediment, constituted for the sake of public morality, arises in the case of sponsalia, or a formal agreement to marry; and in the case of a marriage just celebrated, or ratified, between the persons so engaged, or so married, and certain immediate blood relatives.

The persons affected by these impediments are :—

1. The betrothed, or parties formally engaged, and their respective blood relations to the first degree, *i.e*, the impediment (*honestas*), or public morality,

extends to the first degree between the *sponsus* (the man) and the blood relations of the *sponsa* (the woman), viz.: the mother, sisters, and daughters of the *sponsa*, and *vice-versa*, *i.e.*, the impediment exists also between the *sponsa* (the woman) and the blood relations of the *sponsus* (the man) to the first degree, viz.: the father, brothers, and sons of the *sponsus*.

2. This impediment affects also those who have been already married (*matrimonium ratum*), but who have not yet consummated the marriage (*matrimonium consummatum*) and their blood relations as far as the fourth degree.

Affinitas. IV. An invalidating impediment, known as affinity, arises in reference to any future marriage which may be contemplated in the following cases:—

1. Between married persons and the blood relatives of each other as far as the fourth degree; or,

2. Between unmarried persons and the blood relatives of each other in the second degree, if, unhappily, there should have been unlawful cohabitation, and the crime should have been completed.

3. A serious impediment, known as crimen, arises in the following cases:—

Crimen. 1. Between two persons who have committed the crime of adultery, and who have, at the same time, mutually promised future marriage upon the death of the consort of either party.

2. Between two persons who have committed adultery, and one of whom has afterwards actually taken away the life of the consort of either party, with the object of marrying the accomplice in adultery.

If one of the persons should be ignorant of the intention formed to commit murder, S. Alphonsus considers the opinion, which holds that the impediment does not then exist, as the more probable.

3. Between two persons who have mutually conspired, and have mutually shared in the murder of the consort of either party, with the avowed object of future marriage.

This brief enumeration of impediments will naturally be regarded by the theologian and pastor, as most inperfect and insufficient.

It is not, however, offered, in any sense, as a complete and exhaustive exposition upon this intricate and difficult subject, nor is it intended as a theological treatise, for reference, in cases of difficulty. The pastor, in case of need, will have at hand some trusty guide, and some well authorised and sanctioned theological work upon the whole subject of matrimony, and it is precisely in such a work that this all-important and difficult subject will be found comprehensively dealt with.

For those pastors who have not as yet satisfied themselves as to their author, one of the most recent

and most approved theological works, referred to in the third part of this volume, may be recommended. (Lehmkuhl Theolog., 2 vols., Friburgi, Brisgoniœ, 1886.) With regard to the special subject of the impediments of marriage, the most recent and best is perhaps Synopsis Impedimentorum Matrimonii, by Canon Allegre.

End of Second Part.

PART III.

APPENDIX

CONTAINING

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS FROM THEOLOGIANS AS TO THE VALIDITY AND CEREMONIAL OF MIXED MARRIAGES—LEGAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL FORMS—RITUAL OF MARRIAGE CEREMONY, &c.

BALMEZ—INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH ON THE INDIVIDUAL, THE FAMILY, AND SOCIETY.

THREE DISCOURSES ON MARRIAGE,

BY PERE MONSABRE.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1. Definitions of Councils and of Theologians as to the Sacrament of Matrimony—The minister—The matter and form, and the validity of marriage. 2. Extracts from Councils and Encyclicals as to the celebration of mixed marriages. 3. Encyclical letter to English Bishops on mixed marriages (1868). 4. Decrees of the Council of Westminster as to education in non-Catholic schools. 5. Encyclical on mixed education. 6. Council of Westminster on "Catechetical Instruction in the Church."

Marriage is a true Sacrament.

If anyone shall say that matrimony is not really and truly one of the seven Sacraments of the Evangelical Law, and instituted by Christ Our Lord, but that it was instituted by men in the Church, and that it does not confer grace, let him be anathema. (Council of Trent, Sess. 24, Canon 1.)

Marriage a true Sacrament.

Christian marriage, which has been surrounded by Christ our Lord with a new splendour, has not been essentially changed, but rather elevated.

Definition.

Matrimony is defined to be the individual association of a man and woman, by which they are mutually and lawfully constituted one principle of generation. (Lehmkuhl Theol., Vol. II.).

The Sacrament of Matrimony is distinguished and spoken of as :—

The Sacrament of Matrimony (*in fieri*) in its administration and reception, and

The Sacrament of Matrimony (*in facto*), as a state of life constituted by means of the Sacrament.

By matrimony *in fieri* is understood that transitory action by which a male and female acquire by mutual surrender, and by mutual acceptation, mutual reciprocal rights; or, in other words, by which they are lawfully constituted one principle of generation.

By matrimony *in facto* is understood that legitimate state of marriage which holds the married parties joined together by a moral and legal bond. (Lehmkuhl, Vol. II.)

Matter and Form of the Sacrament of Marriage.

The matter and form of the Sacrament of Marriage is the consent of the parties contracting the marriage, legitimately manifested in such a manner that the marriage is effected as a contract externally, and ought to have reference to a contract there and then to be effected. (Lehmkhul, Vol. II.).

The Validity of Marriage.

The consent which creates the contract and makes the Sacrament, ought to be mutual, deliberate, and voluntary, expressed externally and in reference to the present time. (Lehmkuhl, Vol. II., p. 480-482.)

Minister of the Sacrament of Marriage.

The minister of the Sacrament of Marriage is not the Priest. The contracting parties themselves are both the ministers and the recipients of the sacrament.—(*Lehmkuhl.*)

Effects of the Sacrament of Marriage.

1. An increase of sanctifying grace.

2. A special right to the assistance of actual grace, to enable Christians to bear more easily, and with greater fruit, the burdens of marriage, viz. :—A life-long fidelity, mutual peace, patience, the restraint of passion, education of children, &c.—(*Lehmkuhl.*)

Christian Marriage, as a True Sacrament.

(By His Eminence Cardinal Franzelin).

The legitimate matrimonial contract has been raised by Christ to the dignity of a sacrament, in the case of all those persons who, having been baptised, are capable of receiving the sacrament.

The whole therefore of the sacramental sign, according to the laws of the kingdom of Christ, that is, of the Church, consists of the valid contract by which a man and a woman deliver up their bodies mutually to each other, with a life-long obligation of fidelity. The more general signification which is implied merely, but not effected, is the union of Christ, the Head, with the Church, His mystical Body.

Now, this union of Christ with His Church, the contract aptly represents, inasmuch as from the institution of Christ it especially signifies and effects the sanctification of the contracting parties by means of the effusion of grace from Christ, the head upon them as members in the body of Christ (*Eph.* v). That, therefore, which in the contract is less determined, and which has to be more determined by the medium of something else, is the matter. Now, this appears to be the surrender of their bodies, regarded simply and solely as a surrender (1 *Cor.* vi. 16).

On the other hand, that which gives shape to this surrender and makes it a sacramental sign instituted by Christ, is the form. This form consists of the words which declare the matrimonial obligation to be perpetual, and in fact make it so.

But although in the contract the mutual surrender is made by the words either actually uttered or equivalently signified, nevertheless the transfer of dominion is one thing, and the words by which the transfer is effected and declared are another; therefore in this respect there is nothing to prevent the distinction of matter and form.

Extracts from the Councils of Westminster as to Marriages and Mixed Marriages.

Let priests frequently admonish those under their charge of the sacred character of matrimony, on account of its institution by Our Lord Jesus Christ,

and on account of its being associated by Him with His first miracles.

1. Let priests endeavour to impress them with a holy idea of all marriages which are celebrated according to the Catholic Ritual.

2. Let priests speak in the strongest terms of reprobation, severely censuring those who contract marriage in a Protestant Church.

3. Let priests exhort all persons about to be married, and let them leave no means unturned to induce them to prepare for the Sacrament by approaching the Holy Sacrament of Confession and Communion.

4. Let not a priest celebrate a mixed marriage without having previously obtained, both from the Catholic as well as from the non-Catholic, a promise to educate all the children in the Catholic religion; and further, a promise from the non-Catholic to grant perfect freedom of religious worship to the Catholic party. Lastly, let there be a promise exacted from the Catholic to use every lawful and prudent means to secure the conversion of the non-Catholic.

Decrees of the Councils of Westminster.

(Append. XIII.) on Mixed Marriages.

Instruction to the English Bishops, 1868.

The former instruction, addressed to all Archbishops and Bishops (Nov. 15th, 1858), expressly states what has ever been the mind of the Church in regard to marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics. It

declares that the Church has ever held them in abhorrence, and has pronounced them unlawful and pernicious, both on account of the wicked communion in sacred things, as well as on account of the danger of loss of faith to the Catholic party, and on account of the danger threatening the children yet unborn. Further, the letter refers to the ancient canons, and to the legislation of many Sovereign Pontiffs, by which, although in some degree the severity of the past may have been mitigated so as to allow of occasional dispensations in the case of mixed marriages, nevertheless, dispensations can only be permitted on account of grave reasons, and then with the greatest difficulty and reluctance, and on the express condition of the fulfilment of the prescribed preliminary conditions and precautions which are founded both on the natural and divine law, viz.: that not only shall the Catholic party not be exposed to the loss of faith, but that the Catholic party should know that it is obligatory to endeavour, by every possible means, to reclaim from error the non-Catholic, and that all the children, of both sexes, born of such marriage, shall be educated and brought up in the Catholic faith. (Datum, Romæ, 25 Martii, 1868.)

Decrees of the Council of Westminster

(Decree VIII.)

EDUCATION IN NON-CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.

Let priests oppose, in every possible way, the efforts of the enemies of the Catholic Religion, to induce Catholics to send their children to Catholic schools.

Let them frequently introduce, in sermons and discourses, the subject of the Faith, and point out the duties of parents in regard to their children; and let them remind parents of the strict account, which will be demanded at their hands, of the souls of their children, if they should be lost through their fault.

Especially in the Sacred Tribunal of Penance, let them sedulously endeavour to deter them from thus wickedly bartering the souls entrusted by God to their care. Admonishing them, how severely God threatened His people of old, by the mouth of His prophet, because they had sold the just man for silver, and the poor man for sandals. How much more severely, then, will God deal with parents who, for the sake of some passing reward, or even for clothes for themselves and their children, do not hesitate to send their children to Protestant schools, with the danger of shipwreck of their Faith.

Decrees of the Councils of Westminster on Mixed Education.

(Encycl. S. Cong de Prop. Fide. Appendix XV., p. 321).

Bishops above all, and parish priests, are bound to use all possible care in making parents understand that the greatest evil they can inflict upon their offspring, upon their country, and upon our holy religion, is to expose their children to so manifest a danger as that of frequenting non-Catholic schools. . . . Everyone knows how great is the influence of

the authority of teachers over the young minds of their pupils, and how strongly the pupils are thereby drawn to approve whatever their teachers say or do, whence it happens that while receiving instruction in such schools, they adopt almost unconsciously the errors of their teachers, and learn to despise the Catholic religion.

Add to this the daily and familiar intercourse with young Protestants . . . who by their habits, which often are corrupt, by their indocility, and by their satirical remarks upon our holy religion and the practices of the Church, pervert the minds and deprave the hearts of their Catholic companions. . . . And let it not be thought that those schools in which only secular instruction, or in which only secular subjects are taught, are free from all danger, for besides the evils arising from association and intimacy with companions who have been brought up in heresy and schism, the teachers also are able to mislead the simple minds of their pupils by artifices which are the more effective from being less perceived. (See Inst. S. Cong., March 26, 1886.)

Council of Westminster—Catechism Instructions in the Church.

In addition to the catechism lessons given daily in the schools, let there be every Sunday a public catechism instruction for the children in the Church.

And let there be a plain and intelligible exposition of the mysteries of the faith and of the commandments of God, and of the Church, and of the holy sacraments. Let the priest endeavour, whilst accommodating himself to the capacity of the children, to interest the people. Indeed, by careful and judicious language, and by frequent and apt reference to holy scripture, and by striking and suitable illustrations selected from the lives of the saints, he will find that he will win the attention and impress the minds of the older people.

CHAPTER XIX.

Legal Forms and Preliminaries.

Attendance of the registrar at Catholic marriages—Legal form—Method of complying with the law—Use of the sacristy by the registrar—Fees—Fees in general—Question of domicile—Question of *liber status*, or freedom to marry—Instruction as to proclamation of banns, and as to dispensation from banns—On the Church in which the marriage is to be performed—The Nuptial Mass.

The Registrar in Attendance at Catholic Marriages.

At this moment (1887) the law imposing this attendance of the Registrar is about to be amended.

The attendance of the Registrar at the marriages of Catholics, and his legal relation to them, has long been felt to be a grievance, and one of the religious disabilities which yet remain from the days of persecution and legal penalties, endured for conscience' sake.

The day is already at hand when it is expected that this offensive legal infliction will be withdrawn. Still, whilst we are compelled to endure the presence, and submit to the legal requirements, of the Registrar, it may not be inopportune to direct attention to several points in connection with this legal functionary.

When persons desire to be married, they are bound by the law of the country to notify their intention to the Registrar of Marriages of their district. For this purpose they will repair either to the office or residence of the Registrar. When he has taken down in writing all particulars as to their names, and respective addresses, he will give to them a certificate granting them legal permission to be married in 21 days from that date, or at any subsequent date within the following three months.

For this certificate they will pay one shilling. Their names will then be placed for public inspection in the public office of the Registrar, or Board Room of the Guardians of the Union of that district.

At the expiration of 21 days, the parties to be married may give notice to the Registrar of the day and hour of their intended marriage.

He is legally compelled to conform to their convenience.

On the appointed day, the marriage may take place between the hours of 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., but may not be begun without the presence of the Registrar. There is a heavy legal penalty for the violation of this regulation.

After the marriage ceremony, which, it is needless to say, is conducted without any reference whatever to the Registrar or any legal requirements, the newly married parties, along with the witnesses, repair to the

sacristy, and there submit to certain further legal exactions.

In the first place, a legal declaration is required to be made in the presence of the Registrar, by each of the newly married parties, that they do consent to be married to each other, and that they call upon those present to witness their words.

Several entries are now made in the book of the Registrar. The bridegroom signs his name first, and writes and records his trade or profession, and the name and residence of his father. The bride follows and does the same. The witnesses attest the written evidence, and the officiating priest signs his name. The Registrar is then paid a fee of 5s., and would be glad to write out a marriage certificate *(marriage lines)* for an additional half-a-crown. This would, however, be a work of supererogation. The pastor may naturally object to further intrusion upon his premises, and upon his natural rights and privileges, than is absolutely conceded by the law to its legal representative. Now, the law simply enjoins that the Registrar shall be present. It gives no right to this functionary to convert the sacristy into his private office for his own special benefit. His presence cannot but be regarded as an intrusion from the first. It is offensive and insulting to pastor and people. It is not likely, therefore, that there should be any disposition to grant further toleration than that actually compelled by law.

The pastor will then, naturally, inform his people that he also enters a record of all marriages, and that he enters the names, and other details, in the Marriage Register of the mission, and that he can, and will give certificates of marriage when required. He may, moreover, point out that the fee of the registrar is 2s. 6d., whereas, the pastor, in consideration of the people, is willing to accept, in the case of the poor, a reduced fee.

If, however, the registrar should either ask, or be asked to give a copy of the marriage certificate, he is not empowered, by law, to write it out there and then.

The registrar has no authority or liberty to make use of the sacristy as his private office for his own ends and purposes. The pastor can, and will forbid and prevent such an unwarranted liberty.

A distinction may sometimes be pointed out to the people, that, in the case of the registrar, the certificate of marriage is recognised by law as a legal proof, but, in the case of the pastor's certificate, the law does not acknowledge its validity.

To this, it may be replied, that, for all practical purposes, the certificate of the pastor is sufficient, and in a court of justice it will be accepted (even if not as a legally recognised marriage certificate), at least, as evidence well attested. If, however, it should be called in question and doubted, the production of the legal marriage certificate, copied from the registrar's

book, would only serve to confirm and strengthen the truth of the pastor's certificate.

No reason, therefore, exists why the people should be led to consider the certificate of the pastor of inferior value to that of the registrar.

Legal declaration.

Before passing from the subject of the legal connection of the registrar of marriages with the marriage of Catholics, it may be well to advert to the legal declaration required to be made before the registrar by each of the newly married parties.

Exception is taken by some pastors to the custom observed by many of their brethren of reading aloud the legal form of declaration of marriage for each of the already married parties to repeat in turn.

The words of the "declaration," it is urged, materially and practically renew the contract, which is sacramental, and may not be repeated without material sacrilege. The pastor, therefore, should not be in any way a party to the reiteration of the contract.

Speaking under correction, it may be replied that—

1. It is all-important to instruct the people that the presence of the registrar has not any concern whatever with the sacramental contract, nor with the religious ceremony of marriage.

2. That they have consequently not to regard him in any other light than an official—a clerk—who has

no other purpose than to record the fact of the marriage to his superiors.

3. That, further, the regulation exacting the repetition of the legal form of declaration of marriage before the registrar in the sacristy, is for them a mere matter of form—a repetition of words which they have no intention whatever of uttering, except in the sense that they are already really and validly married.

4. That it must be the last thought in their minds to repeat the words as implying that the sacramental contract has not been already effected in the Church.

5. That, therefore, there will be neither intention nor consent, in the sense of renewing the sacramental contract, further than the affirmation that it has been already validly and irrevocably made.

6. That the whole declaration should be made under protest against its legal enactment,—against its compulsory repetition,—as well as against any implied consent whatever to a supposed renewal of the Religious Act, already completed.

With this explanation, there need be no conscientious objection to submit to the legal requirements on the part of either pastor or people.

Legal Form Required to be Repeated Alternately Before the Registrar.

Legal Form. I, do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I, should not be joined in Matrimony to

I call upon these persons present to witness that I, do take thee, to my lawful wedded (husband or wife).

Marriage Fees.

The Church enjoins upon the faithful, the obligation of supporting their pastors.

"They who preach the Gospel, shall live by the Gospel." (1 *Cor.* ix. 14.)

One of the recognised occasions for the fulfilment of this duty occurs in the case of the administration of the Sacrament of Matrimony, as well as at the time of christenings and burials.

The faithful need reminding of this duty, and also of the manner of its performance.

It is difficult to fix an exact and defined amount, which should be the recognised accepted offering throughout the country. Difference of locality, and difference of custom will prevail.

Still a suggested sliding-scale may be submitted for consideration. It is certainly not too much to expect, that persons in affluent circumstances, should give at least an offering varying from £1 to £20 to the pastor who celebrates the marriage. That persons in a fairly good social position should make an offering varying from 10s. to £5; and that all persons should be instructed to make an offering varying from 5s. to £1.

If, in addition to the marriage ceremony, the laudable desire be expressed to have the privilege of a Nuptial Mass, the recognised and legitimate offering on the part of the rich and affluent should be a sum varying from £5 to £10 and upwards. On the part of those claiming to hold a respectable social position, the offering should be a sum varying from £2 and upwards, and on the part of all others, at least £1.

Legal Penalty.

It will be known to all pastors that not only does the law, as it now exists, requires the presence of the Registrar at all Catholic marriages, but further, it imposes a heavy penalty for every violation of this regulation on the part of the celebrating priest.

The pastor, therefore, who should, under any circumstances whatever, venture to celebrate a marriage without the presence of this legal functionary, would run the risk of having to pay this large sum.

Hence, whatever may be the special reasons in favour of a secret marriage, or however urgent the inducement may appear to be to avoid publicity, it must be ever remembered that the penalty will certainly be inflicted, if the violation of the law should become known. If an exceptional case were to occur in which there were strong reasons for an immediate marriage, and still graver reasons for the absence of all publicity, and for the exclusion of all possibility of discovery, pastors will remember that the decree of the Council

of Trent affecting marriages has not been published in this country. They will also remember in what consists the essential part of the sacramental contract of matrimony, and in all cases, when possible, consult the Bishop. Their course will then be clear.

Freedom to Marry.

Liber Status. Upon notice of an intended marriage, the pastor will do well to inquire, diligently, as to several important particulars, and to visit the houses which have been tendered as the residences of the parties.

The question of the "status liber," or freedom to marry, is important. The pastor must be satisfied on this point.

In the case of those persons who have not been previously married, the difficulty does not arise. But when it is ascertained that one or both parties have been previously married, *certain* proof of the death of the husband or wife must be obtained.

It will sometimes happen that the pastor's inquiries will be met by vague and unsatisfactory answers. The alleged deceased party may have left home, and gone to another country, and may have been absent many years. He or she may be supposed to be dead, or it may have been so reported. It may, however, be a mere fancy. The wish may be father to the thought, and there may not be evidence to substantiate the fact.

In no case is it lawful for the person to be married again, until the freedom to marry be satisfactorily proved.

It matters not that the partner left the applicant under aggravating circumstances, nor that years have elapsed without tidings, nor that rumour has suggested his death. Until evidence of death and burial be forthcoming, the presumption must be in favour of the existence of the absent partner.

A second attempted marriage (supposing the absent party to be alive) would be a sacrilege, and invalid, and the state of life would be the double crime of bigamy and adultery.

In the case of this supposed second marriage, it might happen that on the return of the absent husband or wife connected with the first marriage, the second marriage would be discovered. If, in addition to this, a second family had grown up unconscious of the state of things, a complication of difficulties would arise, and scandal would with difficulty be avoided.

The parties to the second attempted marriage could not then be permitted to continue to live as before (although under special circumstances, where the discovery of the first marriage has not been made, separation *a thoro* might be counselled). If, however, the consent of the party to the second attempted marriage cannot be obtained for their separation *a thoro*, then their immediate and absolute separation may be decreed by the Ecclesiastical Court.

Domicile.

Another matter of importance is the inquiry to be made as to the residence, or domicile, of the parties intending to be married.

If they belong to the district, all the necessary information will be at hand. Their reported residences may be visited, and their character and circumstances can be obtained.

It will be known whether they be related, and whether they be free to marry.

If either belong to another district, and in the same diocese, or in another diocese, a certificate of the prescribed publication of banns will be required from the pastor of the other district, and, in the case of another diocese, also from the Vicar General.

If, however, one or both of the parties have not resided previously in the district, and now, for the first time, take up their abode, then inquiries must be made as to the cause of their sojourn. Have they come in *fraudem legis* to defeat any ecclesiastical law? Have they come merely to be married? Or have they come to make a settled abode, or a partially settled abode?

Here will come in the much vexed question of domicile.

The law of the land recognises one month as a sufficient time of residence for the acquisition of domicile. The law of the Church, if carried out strictly as in a Catholic country, admits of different

applications according to circumstances. In our country the question will resolve itself into two cases.

A domicile or settled residence will be formed if two conditions are fulfilled :—

1. If the parties have actually taken up their abode in the district, and if they have the intention of remaining there, a domicile is at once acquired on the first day of their arrival, and they may be married immediately.

A *quasi* domicile, or partially settled residence, will be obtained, if the parties have already made their abode in the district, and intend to pass the greater part of the year there. In this case, also, if the pastor be assured of the intention, the parties may be considered to have acquired a *quasi* domicile from the first day of their arrival, and may be married without delay.

If, however, there be no certain proof of either intention, or rather, in case of doubt, a residence of one month is sufficient to give a legal presumption that the parties have the intention required for a *quasi* domicile, and consequently they may be married after that time.

Form of Proclamation of Banns.

Be it known to all here present that N. N., of (such a place), and N. N., of (such a place), intend, with the blessing of God, to be joined in holy matrimony. Wherefore, if any of you know of any impediment

either of consanguinity, affinity, or spiritual relationship, or of any other reason whatsoever, why these persons should not be joined in matrimony, we hereby admonish you that you are bound to declare the same to us as soon as possible.

This is the first (second, or third) time of publication.

Instruction as to the Proclamation of Banns.

It will always be necessary to instruct those who propose to be married, that the Church requires three previous public announcements of the intended marriage (publication of banns), to be made at the public service in the Church on three Sundays, or holidays.

That, if the parties live in different parishes, this proclamation should be made in each parish, and that a certificate of such proclamation will be required from the priest of the parish where the marriage is not celebrated, and also a written attestation as to the fulfilment of the ecclesiastical regulation (should such exist in the diocese) of previous confession *in ordine ad matrimonium.*

It will also be a convenience for persons to be guided as to the law requiring 21 days' previous notice to be given to the Registrar of the district, and, in the case of different districts, to the Registrar of each district.

It will also occasionally be an advantage to know that, in the case of one or both of the persons living in the district of a Registrar in which the Church is

not located, but at which they desire to be married, the law permits the parties the privilege of being married at the Church of their choice, especially if that Church have been attended regularly by one of the parties (provided it be within a distance of two miles from their residence); and this, notwithstanding any objection of the Registrar in whose district the Church is not situated.

Instruction as to Dispensation from Banns.

Although a dispensation from the publication of banns may be obtained, it will be well to make known that the request for this dispensation signifies a petition to have set aside in the particular case, a part of the normal and prudent disciplinary regulation laid down by the Church. As the Church does not sanction any such deviation from ecclesiastical discipline without good reasons being assigned, it would be consonant with the spirit of the Church, to urge the exact observance of the law in this respect, where there does not appear to be sufficient reason for its pretermission.

Good reasons often do exist, and causes sufficient to justify an appeal for a dispensation may frequently be tendered.

Still, it may, with profit, be considered whether it be not wise (*secluso scandalo*) to endeavour to secure the integrity of ecclesiastical form and practice.

It may often have great weight with persons pleading for a dispensation, to explain to them the wise and

salutary reasons which led the Church to exact this previous condition before marriage.

Persons are sometimes induced to apply for a dispensation through mistaken notions of the origin and meaning of this practice of the Church. Vain and puerile motives will sometimes actuate them, and induce them to solicit the priest, and even to entreat him to use his influence in furtherance of their wishes.

The matter will often be found to be regarded in a new light, if it be pointed out, that the proclamation of banns is not intended as a censure or as a mark of disrespect; nor is it meant only for the poorer class; nor is it calculated to bring either ridicule or discredit upon the parties. Rather should it be regarded as indicating:—

1. The obedience of good Catholics to the laws and discipline of the Church.

2. The docility of piety in setting a good example to others.

3. The fearlessness of innocence which challenges the world in respect to their liberty ta marry, and in respect to their good name. To the woman especially may this be shown to apply.

Not only is there a well-understood propriety in her name being proclaimed in her own district as one well known to be of good character and unsullied reputation, but there is a wisdom in her having the name of her

affianced proclaimed to the world : he may not be free, he may have contracted obligations.

Let the banns, then, be published. Let the world be challenged. Let no secresy or unworthy concealment be made. Thus shall tongues be silenced, and the good fame of both be confirmed.

On the other hand, if the publication of banns be omitted, then will the curious and prurient be at work surmising and suspecting evil.

Reasons and motives will be readily assigned, and, in many cases, it may be a matter of regret that the Church's wise precautions were laid aside.

On the Church in which the Marriage is to be Performed.

A question has arisen as to whether there is any rule regarding the Church in which a marriage is to be celebrated. Some have thought that a marriage may be performed in any Church, according to the choice of the persons to be married, and some have thought that it may be performed quite indifferently in the Church either of the bride or of the bridegroom.

Although the clause *Tametsi* is not in force in England, and although we have, canonically speaking, no parishes and parish priests, yet we have an established custom, *equivalent to law*, and, moreover, we should also be guided by the spirit of the Council of Trent,

and approximate, as nearly as we can to the observance of the common law and practice of the Church.

Now, in the 24th Session, 1st ch., de Reform, the Council of Trent exhorts the bride and the bridegroom not to dwell in the same house until they have received the sacerdotal benediction, which is to be given in the Church; it ordains that this benediction shall be given by their own parish priest; and that permission to give the aforesaid benediction can be granted by no other than by the said parish priest himself, or by the ordinary, any custom, though immemorial, which ought rather to be considered a corruption, or any privilege to the contrary, notwithstanding.

And if any parish priest, or any other priest, whether regular or secular, shall presume to unite in marriage the betrothed of another parish, and to bless them when married, without the permission of their parish priest, or of the ordinary, he shall be (*ipso facto*) suspended, until absolved by the ordinary of that parish priest, who ought to have been present at the marriage.

From this it is evident that the Church does not grant liberty to persons to be married wherever and by whomsoever they please; but she prescribes the Church and the parish priest of one of the parties who are to be married. Nor is it, as some have urged, a matter of entire indifference as to whether the marriage is performed by the parish priest of the bride or of the bridegroom. Custom regulates this; and as to this

custom the following words of Scavini, de Matrimonio, may suffice :—

Ex universali et antiquissima consuetudine illud (conjugium) celebrandum est in domicilio sponsae ideoque ab illius parocho, et recte ; neque, sane aequum est sponsa paternam domum deserat, nisi jam conjuncta viro ab eoque desponsata; *i.e.*, according to the universal and very ancient custom a marriage should take place in the district in which the bride resides, and in the presence of the parish priest of the district, since it is not considered to be proper for the bride to bid farewell to her father's home until she has been united to her husband in marriage. This custom has, however, its occasional exceptions, and, moreover, is not enforced by any canon or decree.

The Nuptial Mass.

Mind of the Church.

It is much to be deplored that the mind of the Church is not generally known in reference to the Nuptial Mass.

It will be observed that, with a view to safeguard the sanctity of marriage, the Church has connected its celebration with the celebration of Mass. It is during the Mass that the marriage should take place, and it is at the most solemn portion of the Mass that the nuptial blessing is to be pronounced.

It is, therefore, much to be desired that pastors should instruct the faithful as to the mind of the

Church on this matter, and should practically encourage all persons about to be married to have their marriages blessed and sanctified at the time of the celebration of the Holy Mysteries. It will tend much to impress all the parties concerned with the sacred character of marriage, if they should have been trained and led to regard a wedding as properly and fitly associated with the celebration of the specially-appointed Nuptial Mass.

In addition to this, it will be well for the pastor to advise and exhort the parties about to be married, and also those who accompany them to the altar, previously to approach the Sacrament of Confession, and during the Mass, if practicable, to receive Holy Communion.

Nor should such a marriage during Holy Mass be accounted the special privilege of those in high position, or of the rich and well-to-do classes. The poorer portion of the flock should be encouraged to desire and prepare for this blessing. The offering to be made in their case should not be fixed beyond their means. Rather, in the case of the poorer class, should every facility be afforded them to conform to the spirit and mind of the Church. Very beautiful thoughts, in reference to the celebration of marriage in accordance with the spirit and mind of the Church, will have been found in the description already given of a marriage in a Catholic country. (Part II.)

It should be pointed out to the faithful poor and rich alike, that the Nuptial Mass is intended to call

down a special blessing upon the married pair, and that their worthy preparation for its celebration, and for the reception of Holy Communion at that Mass, will be a happy augury for future happiness during life, and for eternal happiness after death.

Thus would a new spirit arise. Thus would a Catholic custom be restored; and thus would the sanctity of marriage be placed still more prominently before the minds of the people.

So important is this suggestion to be regarded, that no words of exhortation to pastors could be deemed sufficiently urgent to induce them to begin at once and prevail upon the faithful to adopt this practice.

Whatever inconvenience, or even pecuniary loss, might be sustained for a time, the reward would be, eventually, a hundred-fold, both spiritually and temporally.

CHAPTER XX.

1. Form of exhortation before marriage. 2. Ritual and marriage ceremony (Latin and English). 3. Form of instruction after marriage.

Form of Instruction for the Sacrament of Marriage.

The holy state of matrimony was instituted by the Almighty in the beginning of the world, and under the law of nature had a particular blessing annexed to it. God created man to His own image—male and female he created them. And God blessed them, saying: "Increase and multiply, and fill the earth." (*Gen.* i. 27, 28.) Under the Mosiac law the Almighty more distinctly announced its dignity and obligations. Afterwards, under the Christian law, our Divine Redeemer sanctified this state still more, and from a natural and civil contract raised it to the dignity of a Sacrament. And St. Paul declared it to be a representation of that sacred union which Jesus Christ had formed with His spouse the Church. This is a great Sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in the Church. (*Ephes.* v. 32.)

This Sacrament was instituted by Jesus Christ, in order to bestow on those who enter into the married state a particular grace, to enable them to discharge

all the duties required of them. It enables them to live together in union, peace, and love. It strengthens and purifies that natural affection, which, founded on virtue, and sanctioned by religion, can alone constitute the happiness of a married life. It corrects the inconstancy of the human heart. It softens down the asperities of temper, and enables each party to bear with each other's defects with the same indulgence as if they were their own. It causes them to entertain sentiments of mutual respect; to preserve inviolable fidelity towards each other; and to vanquish every unlawful desire. It gives grace to subdue or regulate the motions of concupiscence, and to avoid every impropriety inconsistent with the sanctity of their state, for there is an innocence and purity as necessary in a married as in a single life. It, moreover, gives them grace to discharge well that most important duty of training up their children in the fear and love of God; for these duties, annexed to the married state, cannot be fulfilled without great exertions, nor will those exertions be successful without the blessing and grace of God.

Therefore, they who intend to enter into this state ought to proceed with the greatest prudence, and make the best possible preparation, that they may obtain these precious and abundant graces from the Almighty.

1. They ought to implore the divine assistance, by fervent and devout prayer, to guide them in their choice of a proper person; for on the prudent choice

which they make, will very much depend their happiness, both in this life and in the next. They should be guided by the good character and virtuous dispositions of the person of their choice, rather than by riches, beauty, or any other worldly considerations, which ought to be but secondary motives.

2. They ought to enter into this holy state with the pure intention of promoting the honour and glory of God, and the sanctification of their own souls; and not from any merely earthly motive, or for sensual gratification.

3. They ought, moreover, to select a person of their own religion; for the Catholic Church has always, by every means in her power, discouraged mixed marriages; and experience shows, that a want of union in faith between the husband and wife, is frequently attended with the worst consequences, both to themselves and to their children.

A Catholic, on marrying a person of another religion, cannot be allowed to enter into an agreement that any of the children shall be brought up in any other than the Catholic faith.

4. Before they make any advance in a matter of such great importance, they ought to ascertain whether there be any impediment to prevent their lawful union, and parents are in duty bound to prevent too great an intimacy between their children and relations within

the prohibited degrees of kindred. First, second, and third cousins are within the prohibited degrees.

5. They who intend to marry ought to ask the advice of their parents or guardians, &c.

6. Those who keep company with a view to marriage, should be careful never to allow any indecent familiarities, for these are sinful, and draw down upon them the just indignation of God, in place of that blessing of which they then stand so much in need.

7. It is also advisable, some time previous to their marriage, to inform their director of their intentions, that so he may have time and opportunity to point out to them the preparation most useful for them, and instruct them in the duties and obligations of the state of life into which they propose to enter.

8. They must obtain the pardon of their sins, by worthily approaching the Sacrament of Penance ; for should they receive matrimony without purity of conscience, they would deprive themselves for a time of the grace of the sacrament, and be guilty of a sacrilegious profanation of this holy institution.

9. The Church, in the General Council of Trent (Sess. 24, c. i.), ever solicitous for the welfare of her children, exhorts the faithful, before their marriage, to receive, with devotion, the Holy Communion.

10. At the time of marriage, they ought to approach the altar with the greatest decorum and reverence (for there, in the presence of God and His Church, they are

about to enter into a solemn contract and engagement, not to be broken but by death), and receive the benediction of God's minister, with humble and sincere devotion.

11. When the married couple leave the church, they ought to carry with them feelings of respect for the holy Sacrament which they have received, and of gratitude to God for his mercies. They should spend the day in such a manner as not to lose the blessing which they received in the morning. They ought to celebrate their marriage, like holy Tobias, in the fear of the Lord, and strive to conduct themselves amongst their friends with as much sanctity and decorum as if Jesus Christ were a guest among them, as He was at the marriage feast of Cana. They should be particularly careful not to profane the day of their marriage by dissipation or intemperance, or any sinful diversions or indelicate allusions, which are unbecoming at all times, but more particularly on so important and sacred an occasion.

12. They ought frequently to reflect on their duties and obligations as inculcated in the Word of God.

"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved also the Church, and delivered Himself up for it. So, also, ought men to love their wives as their own bodies." (*Ephes.* v. 25, 28.)

"Dwelling with them according to knowledge, giving honour to the female, as to the weaker vessel,

and as to the co-heirs of the grace of life." (I. *Peter* iii. 7.)

"Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord. Because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church. Therefore, as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be subject to their husbands in all things." (*Ephes.* v. 22, 24.)

THE RITUAL FOR THE CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE.

The priest, standing before the altar, vested in a surplice and white stole, accompanied by at least one clerk, to carry the book and a vessel of holy water, and by two or three witnesses, asks the man and woman, separately, as follows, in the vulgar tongue, concerning their consent. And first, he asks the bridegroom, who must stand at the right hand of the woman :

N., wilt thou take N., here present, for thy lawful wife, according to the rite of our Holy Mother, the Church ?

R. I will.

Then the priest asks the bride :

N., wilt thou take N., here present, for thy lawful husband, according to the rite of our Holy Mother, the Church ?

R. I will.

Then the woman is given away by her father or friend, and, if she has never been married before, she has her hand uncovered, but if she is a widow, she has it covered. The man receives her to keep in God's faith and his own, and, holding her by the right hand

in his own right hand, plights her his troth, saying, after the priest, as follows :—

I, N., take thee, N., to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death us do part, if Holy Church will it permit; and thereto I plight thee my troth.

Then they loose their hands, and, joining them again, the woman says, after the priest :—

I, N., take thee, N., to my wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death us do part, if Holy Church will it permit; and thereto I plight thee my troth.

Their troth being thus pledged to each other on both sides, and their right hands joined, the priest says :—

Ego conjungo vos in matrimonium, in nomine Patris, ✠ et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.	I join you together in marriage, in the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Then he sprinkles them with holy water.

This done, the bridegroom places upon the book, gold and silver (which are presently to be delivered into the hands of the bride), and also a ring, which the priest blesses, saying :—

V. Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini.	*V.* Our help is in the name of the Lord.

R. Qui fecit cœlum et terram.

V. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

OREMUS.

Benedic ✠ Domine annulum hunc, quem nos in tuo nomine benedicimus ✠ ut quæ eum gestaverit fidelitatem integram suo sponso tenens in pace et voluntate tua permaneat atque in mutua charitate semper vivat. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

R. Amen.

R. Who hath made heaven and earth.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with Thy spirit.

LET US PRAY.

Bless, ✠ O Lord, this ring, which we bless ✠ in Thy name, that she who shall wear it keeping true faith unto her spouse may abide in Thy peace and will, and ever live in mutual charity. Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Then the priest sprinkles the ring with holy water, in the form of a cross; and the bridegroom having received the ring from the hand of the priest, gives gold and silver to the bride, and says:—

With this ring I thee wed; this gold and silver I thee give; with my body I thee worship; and with all my worldly goods I thee endow.

Then the bridegroom places the ring on the thumb of the left hand of the bride, saying: In the name of the Father; then on the second finger, saying, and of the Son; then on the third finger, saying, and of the Holy Ghost; lastly, on the fourth finger, saying, Amen. And there he leaves the ring.

This done, the priest adds :—

V. Confirma hoc, Deus, quod operatus es in nobis.

R. A templo sancto tuo quod est in Jerusalem.

Kyrie eleison.

Christe eleison.

Kyrie eleison.

Pater noster, &c. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

R. Sed libera nos a malo.

V. Salvos fac servos tuos.

R. Deus meus, sperantes in te.

V. Mitte eis, Domine auxilium de sancto.

R. Et de Sion tuere eos.

V. Confirm, O God, that which Thou hast wrought in us.

R. From Thy holy temple which is in Jerusalem.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Our Father, &c. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Save Thy servants.

R. Who hope in thee, O my God.

V. Send them help, O Lord, from the sanctuary.

R. And defend them out of Sion.

V. Esto eis, Domine turris fortitudinis.

R. A facie inimici.

V. Domine exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

OREMUS.

Respice, quæsumus Domine, super hos famulos tuos et institutis tuis quibus propagationem humani generis ordinasti, benignus assiste, ut qui te auctore junguntur te auxiliante serventur. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

V. Be unto them, O Lord, a tower of strength.

R. From the face of the enemy.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

LET US PRAY.

Look, O Lord, we beseech thee, upon these thy servants, and graciously assist thine own institutions, whereby thou hast ordained the propagation of mankind, that they who are joined together by thy authority, may be preserved by thy help. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

After this, if the nuptial benediction is to be given, a Mass is said, *pro sponso et sponsa*, as in the Roman Missal; everything being observed which is there prescribed, viz.:—

After the *Pater noster*, the priest, standing at the Epistle side of the Altar, and turning towards the bride and bridegroom kneeling before the altar, says over them the following prayers:—

Oremus.

Propitiare, Domine supplicationibus nostris et institutis tuis, quibus propagationem humani generis ordinasti benignus assiste, ut quod te auctore jungitur te auxiliante servetur. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum.

Let us Pray.

Be propitious, O Lord, unto our supplications, and graciously assist thine own institutions, whereby thou hast ordained the propagation of mankind, that that which is joined together by thy authority may be preserved by thy help. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Oremus.

Deus, qui potestate virtutis tuæ de nihilo cuncta fecisti qui dispositis universitatis exordiis; homine, ad imaginem Dei facto, ideo inseparabile mulieris adjutorium condidisti ut fœmineo corpori de virili dares carne principium docens quod ex uno placuisset institui, nunquam licere disjungi: Deus, qui tam excellenti mysterio conjugalem copulam consecrasti ut Christi et ecclesiæ sacramentum præsig-

Let us Pray.

O God, who by the might of thy power didst create all things out of nothing; who, when the beginnings of the universe were set in order, and man was made to the image of God, didst ordain the inseparable assistance of woman, in such wise that thou gavest beginning to her body out of the flesh of man, teaching thereby that what it had pleased thee should be formed of

nares in fœdere nuptiarum: Deus per quem mulier jungitur viro, et societas principaliter ordinata ea benedictione donatur, quæ sola nec per originalis peccati pœnam, nec per diluvii est ablata sententiam: respice propitius super hanc famulam tuam quæ maritali jungenda consortio tua se expetit protectione muniri: sit in ea jugum dilectionis et pacis; fidelis et casta nubat in Christo, imitatrixque sanctarum permaneat fœminarum: sit amabilis viro ut Rachel sapiens ut Rebecca longæva et fidelis ut Sarah; nihil in ea ex actibus suis ille auctor prœvaricationis usurpet; nexa fidei mandatisque permaneat; uni thoro juncta contactus illicitos fugiat: muniat infirmitatem suam robore disciplinæ; sit verecundia gravis, pudore venerabilis

one, it should never be lawful to put asunder; O God, who hast consecrated the bond of matrimony, by such an excellent mystery, that in the covenant of marriage thou wouldst signify the Sacrament of Christ and his Church; O God, by whom woman is joined to man, and society, as ordained from the beginning, is furnished with a blessing which alone was not removed, either in punishment of original sin, or by the sentence of the deluge; look mercifully upon this thy handmaid, who, being now to be joined in wedlock, earnestly desires to be fortified with thy protection: may it be to her a yoke of love and peace: may she marry in Christ, faithful and chaste, and remain a follower of holy women; may she be

doctrinis cœlestibus erudita, sit fœcunda in sobole sit probata et innocens, et ad beatorum requiem atque ad cœlestia regna perveniat: ut videant ambo filios filiorum usque in tertiam et quartam generationem, et ad optatam perveniant senectutem. Per eumdem Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum.

amiable to her husband, like Rachael; wise, like Rebecca; long-lived and faithful, like Sara. In none of her deeds may that author of deceit have any power over her; may she abide firmly knit to the Faith and the Commandments; joined unto one bed, may she fly all unlawful approaches; may she fortify her weakness by the strength of discipline; may she be in shamefacedness grave, in modesty venerable, in heavenly doctrine learned. May she be fruitful in offspring, approved and innocent; and attain unto the rest of the blessed, and unto the heavenly kingdom, that they both may see their children's children unto the third and fourth generation, and arrive at a desired old age, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Then the priest, returning to the middle of the altar, says: Libera nos, &c., as usual; and, after he has received the precious blood, communicates the newly-married couple, and proceeds with the Mass; and, having said the Benedicamus Domino or Ite missa est, before he blesses the people, he turns to the bride and bridegroom, and says:—

Deus Abraham, Deus Isaac, et Deus Jacob sit vobiscum et ipse adimpleat benedictionem suam in vobis; ut videatis filios filiorum vestrorum usque ad tertiam et quartam generationem; et postea vitam æternam habeatis sine fine adjuvante Domino nostro Jesu Christo; qui cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto vivit et regnat Deus per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

May the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob be with you, and Himself fulfil His blessing upon you; that you may see your children's children unto the third and fourth generation; and may afterwards have everlasting life, without end, by the help of Our Lord Jesus Christ; Who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth God, world without end. Amen.

Then the priest admonishes them to preserve fidelity towards each other; to observe continency at seasons of devotion, and particularly at the times of fasting and solemn festivals; to love one another, and to persevere with one heart in the fear of God. Then he

sprinkles them with holy water, and, having said the *Placeat tibi sancta Trinitas*, &c., he gives the Benediction, and reads the last Gospel as usual.

Exhortation immediately after Marriage.

After the nuptial benediction has been given, the priest shall make the following exhortation to the newly married couple :—

You are now joined together in a holy band made and sanctified by God Himself, and not to be dissolved but by death. You should, therefore, endeavour, with all your power, to preserve and cultivate in your souls the grace of this great Sacrament which you have received, and to live up to the sanctity of it in all respects. You must be faithful to each other; you must love each other; you must mutually cherish and assist each other; you must endeavour to walk hand in hand to heaven; you must preserve unviolated the solemn promises of fidelity which, in the presence of God and His Church, you have now made to each other, and even between yourselves must admit of no other liberties than those which the law of God and the holy ends for which matrimony was instituted, ordain or allow; for such would be criminal violations of the sanctity of your state; they would give Satan power over you, and would remove God far from you. If it should please God hereafter to bless you with children, let it be your first, your immediate care after they are born, to make an offering of them to Him,

and, as soon as possible, let them be washed from their original sin, and enrolled amongst the number of His adopted children, by the Sacrament of Baptism, and afterwards, in their earliest infancy, as soon as they can speak, begin to teach them the principles of the Christian faith and the duties of a Christian life. Watch over them with carefulness and diligence; keep them out of evil company and all the dangerous occasions of sin, and train them up in the fear and love of God, always remembering that you will one day have to give an account to God concerning your discharge of these duties; and if any of them should perish through your neglect of giving them a proper education, He will require their souls at your hands. Live, therefore, in the fear of God; faithfully observe all His divine commandments; be regular in your public and private devotions; join with one another daily in prayer; observe religiously all the precepts of the Church. And God will be always with you both in life and death, both in time and in eternity; and may the blessing of Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Ghost, descend upon you, and remain always with you. Amen.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE.

A Philosophical and Historical Exposition of the Great Religious Principles which guided the Catholic Church in the Formation of Christendom and in the Work of European Civilization.*

Synopsis—Points of Consideration.

The influence of the Catholic Church as exercised upon:—1. *European nations generally:*—The principal points and features of European civilization. 2. *The individual:*—His liberation from slavery—His instruction as to independence, free will, and his immortal destiny. 3. *The family:*—Family life purified and consolidated by the teaching and action of the Church—Woman elevated to her proper position—Proclaimed the equal of man in origin and destiny—Reformation of marriage—Its unity and indissolubility proclaimed—Its sacred and sacramental character vindicated. 4. *Society:*—Sound principles of religion, morality, and virtue propagated by the Church—Society saved from ruin and decay by the inflexible firmness of the Catholic Church in prohibiting divorce, and in thus preventing a multitude of evils and disorders.

SECTION I.

Civilization of Europe the Work of the Church.

Abolition of Slavery the Work of the Church.

European civilization owes to the Catholic Church its finest ornament, its most valuable victory in the cause of

* Balmez.—European Civilization.

humanity, the abolition of slavery. It was the Church that, by her doctrines, as beneficent as elevated, by a system as efficacious as prudent, by her unbounded generosity, her indefatigable zeal, her invincible firmness, abolished slavery in Europe; that is to say, she took the first step towards the regeneration of humanity, and laid the first stone for the wide and deep foundation of European civilization.

Summary of Principal Points of European Civilization.

After having shown that it was Catholicity that removed that obstacle to all social progress, by, as it were, cleansing Europe from the disgusting leprosy with which it was infected from head to foot, let us examine what it has done towards creating and erecting the magnificent edifice of European civilization. If we seriously reflect on the vitality and fruitfulness of this civilization, we shall find therein new and powerful claims on the part of the Catholic Church to the gratitude of nations. In the first place, it is proper to glance at the vast and interesting picture which European civilization presents to us, and to sum up in a few words its principal perfections; thereby we shall be enabled the more easily to account to ourselves for the admiration and enthusiasm with which it inspires us.

The individual animated by a lively sense of his own dignity, abounding in activity, perseverance, energy, and the simultaneous development of all his faculties; woman elevated to the rank of consort of man, and, as it were, recompensed for the duty of obedience by the

respectful attentions lavished upon her; the gentleness and constancy of family ties, protected by the powerful guarantees of good order and justice; an admirable public conscience rich in maxims of sublime morality, in laws of justice and equity, in sentiments of honour and dignity; a conscience which survives the shipwreck of private morality, and does not allow unblushing corruption to reach the height which it did in antiquity;

Good government.

a general mildness of manners, which in war prevents great excesses, and in peace renders life more tranquil and pleasing; a profound respect for man, and all that belongs to him, which makes private acts of violence very uncommon, and in all political constitutions serves as a salutary check on governments; an ardent desire of perfection in all departments; an irresistible tendency, sometimes ill-directed, but always active, to improve the condition of the many; a secret impulse to protect the weak, to succour the unfortunate—an impulse which sometimes pursues its course with generous ardour, and which, whenever it is unable to develop itself, remains in the heart of society, and produces there the uneasiness and disquietude of remorse; a cosmopolitan spirit of universality of propagandism, an inexhaustible fund of resources to grow young again, without danger of perishing, and for self-preservation in the most important junctures; a generous impatience which longs to anticipate the future, and produces an incessant movement and agitation, and even sometimes dangers, but

which are generally the germs of great benefits, and the symptoms of a strong principle of life. Such are the great characteristics which distinguish European civilisation; such are the features which place it in a rank immensely superior to that of all other civilisations, ancient or modern.

Contrast between Christian and Pagan Civilisation.

Read the history of antiquity; extend your view over the whole world; wherever Christianity does not reign, and where the barbarous or savage life no longer prevails, you find a civilisation which in nothing resembles our own, and which cannot be compared with it for a moment. In some of these states of civilisation, you will perhaps find a certain degree of regularity, and some marks of power, for they have endured for centuries; but how have they endured? Without movement, without progress; they are devoid of life; their regularity and duration are those of a marble statue, which, motionless itself, sees the waves of generation pass by. There have also been nations whose civilisation displayed motion and activity; but what motion, and what activity? Some, ruled by the mercantile spirit, never succeeded in establishing their internal happiness on a firm basis; their only object was to invade new countries, which tempted their cupidity; to pour into their colonies their superabundant population, and establish numerous factories in new lands; others, continually contending and fighting for a few measures of political freedom, forgot

their social organisation, took no care of their civil liberty, and acted in the narrowest circle of time and space ; they would not be even worthy of having their names preserved for posterity if the genius of the beautiful had not shone there with indescribable charm, and if the monuments of their knowledge, like a mirror, had not preserved the bright rays of Eastern learning ; others, great and terrible, it is true, but troubled by intestine dissentions, bear inscribed upon their front, the formidable destiny of conquest. This destiny they fulfilled by subjugating the world, and then, immediately, their rapid and inevitable ruin approached. Others, in fine, excited by violent fanaticism, raged like waves of the ocean in a storm ; they threw themselves upon other nations, like a devastating torrent, and threatened to involve Christian civilisation itself in their deafening uproar ; but their efforts were vain ; their waves broke against insurmountable barriers ; they repeated their attempts, but they were always compelled to retire ; they fell back again, and spread themselves on the beach with a sullen roar ; and now, look at the Eastern nations, behold them, like an impure pool which the heat of the sun is about to dry up ; see the sons and successors of Mahomet and Omar on their knees at the feet of the European Powers, begging a protection, which policy sometimes affords them, but only with disdain. Such is the picture presented to us by every civilisation, ancient and modern,

Present state of Eastern nations.

except that of Europe, that is, the Christian civilisation by the Catholic Church. It alone at once embraces everything great and noble in the others; it alone survives the most thorough revolutions; it alone extends itself to all races and climates, and accommodates itself to forms of Government the most various; it alone, in fine, unites itself with all kinds of institutions, whenever, by circulating in them its fertile sap, it can produce its sweet and salutary fruits for the good of humanity. And whence comes the immense superority of European civilisation over all others? How has it become so noble, so rich, so varied, so fruitful, with the stamp of dignity, of nobility, and of loftiness, without castes, without slaves, without eunuchs, without any of those miseries which prey upon other ancient and modern nations?

Europeans the privileged children of Providence.

It often happens that we Europeans complain and lament more than the most unfortunate portion of the human world ever did; and we forget that we are the privileged children of Providence, and that our evils, our share of the unavoidable patrimony of humanity, are very slight, are nothing in comparison with those which have been, and still are, suffered by other nations. Even the extent of our good fortune itself renders us difficult to please, and exceedingly fastidious.

We are like a man of high rank, accustomed to live respected and esteemed in the midst of ease and plea-

sure, who is indignant at a slighting word, who is filled with disquietude and affliction at the most trifling contradiction, and who forgets the multitude of men who are plunged in misery, and whose nakedness is covered with a few rags, and who meet with a thousand insults and refusals before they can obtain a morsel of bread to satisfy the cravings of hunger.

The mind, when contemplating European civilisation, experiences so many different impressions, is attracted by so many objects, that at one and the same time claim its attention and preference, that, charmed by the magnificent spectacle, it is dazzled, and knows not where to commence the examination. The best way in such a case is to simplify and to decompose the complex object, and to reduce it to its simplest elements. The individual, the family, and society: these we have thoroughly to examine, and these ought to be the subjects of our inquiries. If we succeed in fully understanding these three elements, as they really are in themselves, and apart from the slight variations which do not affect their essence, European civilisation, with all its riches and all its secrets, will be presented to our view, like a fertile and beautiful landscape lit up by the morning sun.

The explanation of European greatness to be found in the consideration of the individual, the family, and society.

European civilization is in possession of the principal truths with respect to the individual, to the family, and to society. It is to this that it owes all that it is, and all that it has. Nowhere have the true nature,

the true relations and object, of these three things been better understood than in Europe. With respect to them, we have ideas, sentiments, and views, which have been wanting in other civilizations. Now these ideas and feelings, strongly marked on the face of European nations, have inoculated their laws, manners, institutions, customs, and language; they are inhaled with the air, for they have impregnated the whole atmosphere with their vivifying aroma. To what is this owing? To the fact that Europe, for many centuries, has had within its bosom a powerful principle which preserves, propagates, and fructifies the truth; and it was especially in those times of difficulty, when disorganised society had to assume a new form, that this regenerating principle had the greatest influence and ascendency. Time has passed away, great changes have taken place, Catholicity has undergone vast vicissitudes in its power and influence on society; but civilization, its work, was too strong to be easily destroyed; the impulse which had been given to Europe was too powerful and well secured to be easily diverted from its course.

All European Civilization due to the Principle of Catholicity.

Europe was like a young man, gifted with a strong constitution, and full of health and vigour; the excesses of labour, or of dissipation, reduce him and make him grow pale; but soon the hue of health returns to his countenance, and his limbs recover their suppleness and vigour.

SECTION II.

Christian Civilization—The Individual.

The individual.

The individual is the first and simplest element of society. If the individual is not well constituted, if he is ill-understood and ill-appreciated, there will always be an obstacle to the progress of real civilization. First of all, we must observe, that we speak here, only of the individual, of man, as he is in himself, apart from the numerous relations which surround him, when we come to consider him as a member of society. But let it not be imagined from this that we wish to consider him in a state of absolute isolation, to carry him into the desert, to reduce him to the savage state, and analyse the individuality as it appears to us in a few wandering hordes, a monstrous exception, which is only the result of the degradation of our nature. Equally useless would it be to revive the theory of Rousseau, that pure Utopianism, which can only lead to error and extravagance. We may examine the pieces of a machine separately for the better understanding of its particular construction, but we must take care not to forget the purpose for which the different parts are intended, and we must not lose sight of the whole, of which they form a part. Without that precaution the judgment we should form of them would certainly be erroneous.

The most wonderful and sublime picture would be only a ridiculous monstrosity if its group and figures were considered in a state of isolation from its other parts; in this way the prodigies of Michael Angelo and Raffael might be taken for the dreams of a madman.

Man is not alone in the world; nor is he born to live alone. Besides, what is he in himself? He is a part of the great scheme of the universe. Besides the destiny which belongs to him, in the vast plan of creation, he is raised by the bounty of his Maker to another sphere, above all earthly thoughts. Good philosophy requires that we should forget nothing of all this. It now remains for us to consider the individual and individuality.

The dignity of man.

The feeling of the dignity of man is deeply engraven on the heart of modern society. We find everywhere, written in striking characters, this truth, that man, by virtue of his title of man, is worthy of respect and of consideration; hence it is, that all the schools of modern times, that have foolishly undertaken to exalt the individual, at the imminent risk of producing fearful perturbations in society, have adopted, as the constant theme of their instructions, this dignity and nobility of man. They thus distinguish themselves in the most decided manner from the democrats of antiquity; the latter acted in a narrow sphere, without departing from a certain order of things—without looking beyond the limits of their own country; in the spirit of modern democrats,

on the contrary, we find a tendency to embrace all branches, an ardent propagandism which embraces the whole world. They never invoke mean ideas. Man, his reason, and his imprescriptible rights, are their perpetual theme. Ask them what is their design, and they will tell you that they desire to level all things, to avenge the sacred cause of humanity.

This exaggeration of ideas, the pretext and motive for so many crimes, shows us a valuable fact, viz., the immense progress which Christianity has given to ideas in relation to the dignity of our nature. The Christian Religion, the enemy of all that is criminal, could not consent to see society overturned, under the pretence of defending and raising the dignity of man; this is the reason why a great number of the most ardent democrats have indulged in insults and sarcasms against religion. On the other hand, as history loudly proclaims that all our knowledge and feeling of what is true, just, and reasonable on this point, is due to the Christian Religion, it has been recently attempted to make a monstrous alliance between Christian ideas and the most extravagant of democratic theories. A celebrated man has undertaken this enterprise; but true Christianity, that is, Catholicity, rejects these adulterous alliances; it ceases to acknowledge its most eminent apologists when they have quitted the path of eternal truth. De Lammenais now wanders in the darkness of terror, embracing a deceitful shadow of Christianity;

Democracy and religion.

and the voice of the supreme pastor of the Church has warned the faithful against being dazzled by the illusion of a name illustrious by so may titles.

SECTION III.

The Power of the Church over the People.

The principle of association did not destroy individuality.

If we give a just and legitimate meaning to the word *individuality*, taking the feeling of personal independence in an acceptation which is not repugnant to the perfection of the individual, and does not oppose the constitutive principles of all society; moreover, if we seek the various causes which have influenced the development of this feeling, without speaking of that which we have already pointed out as one of the most important—viz., the true notion of man, and his connection with his fellows, we shall find many of them which are quite worthy of the attention of Catholicity.

Objections of M. Guizot to the work of the Church.

M. Guizot was greatly deceived when, putting the faithful of the Church in the same rank with the ancient Romans, he asserted that both were equally wanting in the feeling of personal independence. He describes the faithful as absorbed by the association of the Church, entirely devoted to her, ready to sacrifice themselves for her; so that, according to him, it was the interests of the association which induced them to act. There is an error here; but as this error has originated in a truth, it is our duty to

distinguish the ideas and the facts with much attention.

Reply to M. Guizot.

There is no doubt that, from the cradle of Christianity, the faithful have had an extreme attachment to the Church; and it was always well understood among them, that they could not leave the communion of the Church without ceasing to be numbered among the true disciples of Jesus Christ. It is equally undeniable that, in the words of M. Guizot, "There prevailed, in the Christian Church, a feeling of strong attachment to the Christian corporation, of devotion to its laws, and an ardent desire to extend its empire;" but it is not true that the origin and source of all these feelings was the spirit of association alone, to the exclusion of all development of real individuality. The Christian belonged to an association, but that association was regarded by him as a means of obtaining eternal happiness, as the ship in which he was embarked, amid the tempests of the world, to arrive safe in the port of eternity; and although he believed it impossible to be saved out of the Church, he did not understand from that, that he was devoted to the Church, but to God. The Roman was ready to sacrifice himself for his country: the Christian for his faith. When the Roman died, he died for his country: the faithful did not die for the Church, but for God. If we open the monuments of Church history, and read the acts of the martyrs, we shall then see what passed in that terrible

Not the mere Idea of Association which influences Catholics.

moment, when the Christian, fully arousing himself, showed, in the presence of the instruments of torture, burning piles, and the most horrible punishments, the true principle which acted on his mind. The judge asks his name; he declares it, and adds, "I am a Christian." He is asked to sacrifice to the gods. "We only sacrifice to one God, the Creator of heaven and earth." He is reproached with the disgrace of following a man who has been nailed to the Cross: for him the ignominy of the Cross is a glory; and he loudly proclaims that the Crucified is his Saviour and his God. He is threatened with tortures: he despises them, for they are passing; and rejoices in being able to suffer something for his Master.

The cross of punishment is already prepared; the pile is lighted before his eyes; the executioner raises the fatal axe to strike off his head: what does it matter to him? all this is but for a moment, and after that moment comes a new life of ineffable and endless happiness. We thus see what influenced his heart: it was the love of his God, and the interest of his eternal happiness. Consequently, it is utterly false that the Christian, like men of the ancient republics, destroyed his individuality in the association to which he belonged, allowing himself to be absorbed in that association like a drop of water in the immensity of the ocean. The Christian belonged to an association which gave him the rule of his faith and conduct; he regarded that association

It was the Love of God which was the real Principle of Action, and not merely the Principle of Association.

as founded and directed by God himself; but his mind and his heart were raised to God, and when following the voice of the Church, he believed that he was engaged with his own individual affair, which was nothing less than his eternal happiness. This distinction is quite necessary in an affair which has relations so various and delicate that the slightest confusion may produce considerable errors. Here a hidden fact reveals itself to us, which is infinitely precious, and throws much light upon the development and perfecting of the individual in Christian civilisation. It is absolutely necessary that there should be a social order to which the individual must submit; but it is also proper that he should not be absorbed by society to such an extent that he cannot be conceived but as forming part of it, and remains deprived of his own sphere of action. If this were the case, never would true civilisation be completely developed; as it consists in the simultaneous perfecting of the individual and of society, it is necessary for its existence that both should have a well-determined sphere, where their peculiar and respective movements may not check and embarrass each other. . . . . After these reflections, to which I especially call the attention of all thinking men, I will point out a thing which has, perhaps, not yet been remarked; it is, that Christianity has eminently contributed to create that individual sphere in which man, without breaking the ties which connect him with society, is free to

Catholicity has created the individual sphere for development.

develope all his peculiar faculties. From the mouth of an Apostle went forth that generous expression, which strictly limits political power, "We ought to obey God rather than man" (*Acts* v. 29). *Obedire oportet Deo magis quam hominibus.* The Apostle thereby proclaims that the individual should cease to acknowledge power, when power exacts from him what he believes to be contrary to conscience. It was among Christians that this great example was witnessed for the first time; individuals of all countries, of all ages, of both sexes, of all conditions, braving the anger of authority, and all the fury of popular passions, rather than pronounce a single word contrary to the principles which they professed in the sanctuary of conscience; and this, not with arms in their hands, in the midst of popular commotions, where their impetuous passions are excited, which communicate to the mind temporary energy, but in the solitude and obscurity of dungeons, and in the fearful calmness of the tribunals; that is, in that situation where man, alone and isolated, cannot show force and dignity without revealing the elevation of his ideas, the nobleness of his feelings, the unalterable firmness of his conscience, and the greatness of his soul.

Christianity engraved this truth deeply on the heart of man, that individuals have duties to perform, even when the whole world is aroused against them; that they have an immense destiny to fulfil and that it is entirely their own affair, the responsibility of which

rests upon their own free will. This important truth unceasingly inculcated by Christianity at all times, to both sexes, to all conditions, must have powerfully contributed to excite in man an active and ardent feeling of personality. This feeling, with all its sublimity, combining with the other inspirations of Christianity, all full of dignity and grandeur, has raised the human mind from the dust, where ignorance and rude superstitions, and systems of violence, which oppressed it on all sides, had placed and retained it. How strange and surprising to the ears of Pagans must have been those energetic words of Justin, which nevertheless expressed the disposition of mind of the majority of the faithful, when, in his apology addressed to Atoninus Pius, he said, "As we have not placed our hopes on present things, we contemn those who kill us, death being, moreover, a thing which cannot be avoided."

This full and entire self-consciousness, this heroic contempt of death, this calm spirit of a man who, supported by the testimony of intimate feeling, sets at defiance all the powers of earth, must have tended the more to enlarge the mind, as they did not emanate from that cold, stoical impassibility, the constant effort of which was to struggle against the nature of things without any solid motive. The Christian sentiment had its origin in a sublime feeling of detachment from all that is earthly, in a profound conviction of the holiness of duty, and in that undeniable maxim, that

man, in spite of all the obstacles which the world places in his way, should walk with a firm step towards the destiny which is marked out for him by his Creator. These ideas and feelings communicated to the soul a strong and vigorous temper, which, without reaching in any degree the savage harshness of the ancients, raised man to all his dignity, nobleness, and grandeur. It must be observed that these convictions and principles of conduct were not confined to a small number of privileged individuals, but that, in conformity with the genius of the Christian religion, they extended to all classes; for one of the noblest characters of that divine religion is the unlimited expansion which it gives to all that is good; it knows no distinction of persons, and makes its voice penetrate the obscurest places of society. It was not only to the elevated classes and philosophers, but to the generality of the faithful, that St. Cyprian, the light of Africa, addressed himself, when summing up in a few words all the grandeur of man, he marked with a bold hand the sublime position where our soul ought to maintain itself with constancy. "Never," he says, "never will he who feels himself to be the child of God admire the words of man. He falls from his noblest state who can admire anything apart from God." *De spectaculis.* Sublime words, which make us boldly raise our heads, and fill our hearts with noble feelings; words which, diffusing themselves over all classes like a fertilising warmth, were capable of inspiring the humblest of men with

what previously seemed exclusively reserved for the transports of the poet.

> Os homini sublime dedit cœlumque tueri,
> Jussit et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.

Moral life of man due to the Church.

The development of the moral life, the interior life, that life of conscience, in which man, reflecting on himself, is accustomed to render a circumstantial account of all his actions, of the motives which actuate him, of the goodness or the wickedness of those motives, and the object to which they tend, is principally due to Christianity, to its unceasing influence on man, in all its conditions, in all its situations, in all moments of his life. Such a progress of the individual life in all that it has most intimate, most active, and most interesting for the heart of man, was incompatible with that absorption of the individual by society, with that blind self-denial, in which man forgot himself, to think only of the association of which he formed a part. This moral and interior life was unknown to the ancients, because they wanted principles for supporting, rules for guiding, and inspirations for exciting and nourishing it. Thus, at Rome, where the political element tried its ascendency over minds, when enthusiasm became extinguished by the effect of intestine dissensions, when every generous feeling became stifled by the insupportable despotism which succeeded to the last agitations of the republic, we see baseness and corruption develope themselves with fearful rapidity. The activity of mind which

before occupied itself in the debates of the Forum, and in the glorious exploits of war, no longer finding food, gave itself up to sensual pleasures, with an abandonment which we can hardly imagine now-a-days, in spite of the looseness of morals, which we so justly deplore.

Thus we see among the ancients only these two extremes, either the most exalted patriotism, or the complete prostration of the faculties of the soul, which abandons itself, without reserve, to the dictates of its irregular passions: there, man was the slave either of his own passions, of another man, or of society.

Since the moral tie which united men to Catholic society has been broken; since religious belief has been awakened, in consequence of the individual independence which Protestantism has proclaimed in religious matters, it has unhappily become possible for us to conceive, by means of examples found in European civilizations, what man, still deprived of real knowledge of himself, his origin, and destiny, must have been.

We will indicate in another place the points of resemblance which are found between ancient and modern society in the countries where the influence of religious ideas is enfeebled. It is enough now to remark that, if Europe had completely lost Christianity, according to the insane desires of some men, a generation would not have passed away without there having been revived among us the individual and society such as they were among the ancients, except the modifica-

tions which the difference of the material state of the two civilizations would have necessarily produced.

The influence of the Catholic Doctrine of Free Will.

The doctrine of free will, so loudly proclaimed by Catholicity, and sustained by her with such vigour, not only against the old Pagan teaching, but particularly against sectarians at all times, and especially against the founders of the pretended Reformation, has also contributed more than is imagined to develope and perfect the individual; to raise his ideas of independence, nobleness, and dignity.

When man comes to consider himself as constrained by the irresistible force of destiny, and attached to a chain of events over which he has no control; when he comes to suppose that the operations of his mind, those active proofs of his freedom, are but vain illusions, he soon annihilates himself; he feels himself assimilated to the brute; he ceases to be the prince of living beings, the ruler of the earth; he is nothing more than a machine fixed in its place, which is compelled to perform its part in the great system of the universe. The social order ceases to exist; merit and demerit, praise and blame, reward and punishment, are only unmeaning words. If man enjoys or suffers, it is only in the same way as a shrub, which is sometimes breathed upon softly by the zephyrs, and sometimes blasted by the north wind. How different it is when man is conscious of his liberty? Then he is master of his destiny; good and evil, life and death, are before his eyes; he

can choose, and nothing can violate the sanctuary of his conscience.

There the soul is enthroned, there she is seated, full of dignity, and the whole world raging against her, the universe, falling upon her fragile body, cannot force her will. The moral order is displayed before us in all its grandeur; we see good in all its beauty, and evil in all its deformity; the desire of doing well stimulates, and the fear of doing ill restrains us; the sight of the recompense which can be obtained by an effort of free will, and which appears at the end of the path of virtue, renders that path more sweet and peaceful, and communicates activity and energy to the soul. If man is free, there remains something great and terrible, even in his crime, in his punishment, and even in the despair of hell. What, is man deprived of liberty, and yet punished? What is the meaning of this absurd proposition, a chief dogma of the founders of Protestantism? This man is a weak and miserable victim, in whose torture a cruel omnipotence delights? God is He who has created him in order to see him suffer; a tyrant with infinite power, that is, the most dreadful of monsters. But if man is free, when he suffers he suffers because he has deserved it; and if we contemplate him in the midst of despair, plunged into an ocean of horrors, his brow furrowed by the just lightnings of the Eternal, we seem to hear him still pronounce those terrible words with a haughty bearing and proud look—*non serviam*, I will not obey.

In man, as in the universe, all is wonderfully united; all the faculties of man have delicate and intimate relations with each other, and the movement of one chord in the soul makes all the others vibrate. It is necessary to call attention to this reciprocal dependence of all our faculties on each other, in order to anticipate an objection which may be made. We shall be told that all that has been said only proves that Catholicity has developed the individual in a mystical sense. No, the observations which have been made show something more than this, they prove that we owe to Catholicity the clear idea and lively feeling of moral order in all its greatness and beauty; they prove that we owe her the real strength of what we call conscience, and that if the individual believes himself to be called to a mighty destiny, confided to his own free will, and the care of which belongs entirely to him, it is to Catholicity he owes that belief; they prove that Catholicity has given man the true knowledge which he has of himself, the appreciation of his dignity, the respect which is paid to him as man; they prove that she has developed in our souls the germs of the noblest and most generous feelings, for she has raised our thoughts by the loftiest conceptions, dilated our hearts by the assurance of a liberty which nothing can take away; by the promise of an infinite reward—eternal happiness,—while she leaves in our hands life and death, and makes us in a certain manner the arbiters of our own destiny.

The idea of moral order due to Catholicity.

Man's sense of personal dignity due to Catholicity.

In all this, there is more than mere mysticism; it is nothing less than the development of the entire man; nothing less then the true, the only noble, just, and reasonable individuality; nothing less than the collected powerful impulses which urge the individual towards perfection in every sense; it is nothing less than the first, the most indispensible, the most beautiful element of real civilization.

SECTION IV.

Catholic Church and the Family.

The Catholic Church and the family.

We have seen what the individual owes to Catholicity; let us now see what the family owes to her. It is clear that the individual, being the first element of the family, if it is Catholicity which has tended to perfect him, the improvement of the family will thus have been very much her work; but without insisting on this inference, let us consider the conjugal tie in itself; for which purpose it is necessary to call attention to woman. It is not necessary to repeat here what she was among the Romans, and what she is still among the nations who are not Christians; history, and still more the literature of Greece and Rome, afford us sad or rather shameful proofs on this subject; and all the nations of the earth offer us too many evidences of the truth and exactness of the observation of Buchanan, viz., "that

The conjugal tie—woman.

wherever Christianity does not prevail, *there is a tendency to the degradation of woman.* Perhaps on this point Protestantism will be unwilling to give way to Catholicity; it will assert that in all that affects woman the Reformation has in no degree prejudiced the civilization of Europe. We will not now inquire what evils Protestantism has occasioned in this respect; this question will be discussed on some other occasion; but it cannot be doubted, that when Protestantism appeared, the Catholic religion had already completed its task as far as woman is concerned. No one, indeed, is ignorant that the respect and consideration which are given to women, and the influence which they exercise on society, date further back than the first part of the 16th century. Hence it follows that Catholicity cannot have had Protestantism as a coadjutor; it acted entirely alone in this point,—one of the most important elements of all true civilization; and if it is generally acknowledged that Christianity has placed woman in the rank which properly belongs to her, and which is most conducive to the good of the family and of society, this is a homage paid to Catholicity; for at the time when woman was raised from abjection; when it was attempted to restore her to the rank of companion of man, as worthy of him, those dissenting sects, that also call themselves Christians, did not exist, and there was no other Christianity than the

Woman's elevation and restoration accomplished before the era of the Reformation.

Woman owes her honourable position to the Catholic Church.

By what means did the Catholic Church raise woman from degradation to a position of honour?

Catholic Church. . . . . What, then, are the means which Catholicity has employed to give respect and dignity to woman? Before descending to details, we must observe that the grand ideas of Christianity, with respect to humanity, must have contributed, in an extraordinary manner, to the improvement of the lot of woman. These ideas, which applied, without any difference, to woman as well as to man, were an energetic protest against the state of degradation in which one-half of the human race was placed.

The Christian doctrine made the existing prejudices against woman vanish for ever; it made her *equal to man by unity of origin and destiny*, and in the participation of the heavenly gifts; it enrolled her in the universal brotherhood of man,—with his fellows aud with Jesus Christ; it considered her as the child of God,—the co-heiress of Jesus Christ; *as the companion of man, and no longer as a slave, and the vile instrument of his pleasure.* Henceforth that philosophy which had previously attempted to degrade her was silenced; that unblushing literature, which treated women with so much insolence, found a check in the Christian precepts, and a reprimand, no less eloquent than severe, in the dignified manner in which all the ecclesiastical writers, in imitation of the Scriptures, expressed themselves on woman. Yet, in spite of the beneficent influence which the Christian doctrines

must have exercised by themselves, the desired end would not have been completely attained, had not the Church undertaken, with the warmest energy, to accomplish a work the most necessary, the most indispensable, for the good organization of the family and society,—*the reformation of marriage.*

Woman's indebtedness to the Catholic Church for reformation of marriage.

The Christian doctrine on this point is very simple; one with one exclusively and for ever. But the doctrine would have been powerless, if the Church had not undertaken to apply it, and if she had not carried on this task with invincible firmness; for the passions, above all, those of man, rebel against such a doctrine; and they would undoubtedly have trodden it under foot, if they had not met with an insurmountable barrier, which did not leave them the most distant hope of triumph. Can Protestantism, which applauded with such senseless joy the scandal of Henry VIII., and accommodated itself so basely to the desires of the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, boast of having contributed to strengthen that barrier? What a surprising difference! During many centuries, amid circumstances the most various, and sometimes the most terrible, the Catholic Church struggles with intrepidity against the passions of potentates, to maintain unsullied the sanctity of marriage. Neither promises nor threats could move Rome; no means could obtain from her anything contrary to the instructions of her Divine Master.

Protestantism profanes the sanctity of marriage.

Protestantism, at the first shock, or rather at the first shadow of the slightest embarrassment, at the mere fear of displeasing a prince, who certainly was not very powerful, yields, humbles itself, consents to polygamy, betrays its own conscience, opens a wide door to the passions, and gives up to them the sanctity of marriage, the first pledge for the good of the family, the foundation stone of true civilisation.

Protestant society on this point, wiser than the miscalled reformers who attempted to guide it, with admirable good sense, repudiated the consequences of the conduct of its chiefs. Although it did not preserve the doctrines of Catholicity, it at least followed the salutary impulse which it had received from them, and polygamy was not established in Europe. But history records facts which show the weakness of the pretended reformation, and the vivifying power of Catholicity. It tells us to whom it is owing that the law of marriage, that palladium of society, was not falsified, perverted, destroyed, amid the barbarous ages, amid the most fearful corruption, violence, and ferocity, which prevailed everywhere, as well at the time when invading nations passed pell-mell over Europe, as in that of feudality, and when the power of kings had already been preponderant. History will tell what tutelary force prevented the torrent of sensuality from overflowing with all its violence, with all its caprices, from bringing about the

The Church guarded the sanctity of marriage throughout the middle ages.

most profound disorganization, from corrupting the character of European civilization, and precipitating it into that fearful abyss in which the nations of Asia have been for so many centuries engulphed.

Prejudiced writers have carefully searched the annals of ecclesiastical history for the differences between popes and kings, and have taken occasion therein to reproach the Court of Rome with its intolerant obstinacy respecting the sanctity of marriage. If the spirit of party had not blinded them, they would have understood that, if this intolerant obstinacy had been relaxed for a moment, if the Roman Pontiff had given way one step before the impetuosity of the passions, this first step once made, the descent into the abyss would have been rapid. They ought to have admired the spirit of truth, the deep conviction, the lively faith with which that august See is animated; no consideration, no fear, has been able to silence her, when she had occasion to remind all, and especially kings and potentates, of this commandment: "They shall be two in one flesh: man shall not separate what God has joined."

The inflexible firmness of all Popes in defence of woman and the sanctity of marriage.

By showing themselves inflexible on this point, even at the risk of the anger of kings, not only have the Popes performed the sacred duty which was imposed on them by their august character as chiefs of Christianity, but they have executed a political *chef d'œuvre*, and greatly contributed to the repose and well-being of

nations. "For," says Voltaire, "the marriages of princes in Europe decide the destiny of nations; and never has there been a court entirely devoted to debauchery without producing revolutions and rebellions." (*Essai sur l'Histoire générale, t. iii. c. 101.*)

This correct remark of Voltaire will suffice to vindicate the Popes, together with Catholicity, from the calumnies of their wretched detractors: it becomes, however, still more valuable, and acquires a still greater importance, if it is extended beyond the limits of the political order to the social. The imagination is affrighted at the thought of what would have happened if these barbarous kings, in whom the splendour of the purple but ill disguised the sons of the forest; if those haughty seigneurs, fortified in their castles, clothed in mail, and surrounded by their timid vassals, had not found a check in the authority of the Church; if at the first glance at a new beauty, if at the first passion, which, when enkindled in their hearts, would have inspired them with a disgust for their legitimate spouses, they had not had the always-present recollection of an inflexible authority.

They could, it is true, load a Bishop with vexations; they could silence him with threats or promises; they might control the votes of a particular council by violence, by intrigue, by subornation; but, in the distance, the power of the Vatican, the shadow of the Sovereign Pontiff appeared to them like an alarming vision. They then lost all hope. All struggles became

useless; the most violent endeavours would never have given them the victory; th most astute intrigues, the most humble entreaties, would have obtained the same reply: "ONE WITH ONE ONLY, AND FOR EVER."

Woman defended by the Church throughout the middle ages.

If we read but the history of the middle ages, of that immense scene of violence where the barbarian, striving to break the bonds which civilisation attempted to impose on him, appears so vividly; if we recollect that the Church was obliged to keep guard incessantly and vigilantly, not only to prevent the ties of marriage from being broken, but even to preserve virgins (and even those who were dedicated to God) from violence, we shall clearly see that, if she had not opposed herself, as a wall of brass, to the torrent of sensuality, the palaces of kings and the castles of seigneurs would have speedily become their seraglios and harems. What would have happened in the other classes? They would have followed the same course, and the women of Europe would have remained in the state of degradation in which the Mussulman women still are. As we have alluded to the followers of Mohammed, it may be well to reply in passing to those who pretend to explain monogamy and polygamy by climate alone.

Monogamy and polygamy not due to difference of climate.

Christians and Mahommedans have been for a long time under the same sky, and their religions have been established by the vicissitudes of the two races, sometimes in cold and sometimes in mild and temperate climates; and yet we

have not seen the religions accommodate themselves to the climates; but, rather, the climates, have been, as it were, forced to bend to the religions. European nations owe eternal gratitude to Catholicity, which has preserved monogamy for them, which is one of the causes which have, undoubtedly, contributed the most to the good organization of the family, and the exaltation of woman.

Luther on polygamy and woman.

What would now be the condition of Europe, what respect would woman now enjoy, if Luther, the founder of Protestantism, had succeeded in inspiring society with the indifference which he shows on this point in his commentary on Genesis? As to whether we may have several wives, says Luther, "the authority of the Patriarchs leaves us completely free." He afterwards adds that "IT IS A THING NEITHER PERMITTED NOR PROHIBITED, AND THAT HE DOES NOT DECIDE ANYTHING THEREUPON." Unhappy Europe! if a man who had whole nations as followers, had uttered such words some centuries earlier, at the time when civilisation had not yet received an impulse strong enough to make it take a decided line on these most important points, in spite of false doctrines. Unhappy Europe! if, at the time when Luther wrote, manners had not been already formed; if the good organisation given to the family by Catholicity had not been too deeply rooted to be torn up by the hand of man. Certainly the scandal of the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel would not then have

remained an isolated example, and the culpable compliance of the Lutheran doctors would have produced bitter fruits. What would that vacillating faith, that uncertainty, that cowardice with which the Protestant Church was seen to tremble at the mere demand of such a prince as the Landgrave, have availed, to control the fierce impetuosity of barbarous and corrupted nations ?

How would a struggle, lasting for ages, have been sustained by those who, at the first menace of battle, gave way, and were routed before the shock?

Besides monogamy it may be said that there is nothing more important than the indissolubility of marriage.

Those who, departing from the doctrine of the Church, think that it is useful in certain cases to allow divorce, so as to dissolve the conjugal tie, and permit each of the parties to marry again, will not deny that they regard divorce as a dangerous remedy, which the legislator only avails himself of with regret, and only on account of crime or faithlessness. They will see, also, that a great number of divorces would produce very great evils, and, that in order to prevent these evils in countries where the civil laws allow the abuse of divorce, it is necessary to surround this permission with all imaginable precautions; they will, consequently, grant that the most efficacious manner of preventing corruption of manners, of guaranteeing the tranquillity of families, and of opposing a firm barrier

to the torrent of evils, which is ready to inundate society, is to establish the indissolubility of marriage as a moral principle, to base it upon motives which exercise a powerful ascendency over the heart, and to keep a constant restraint on the passions, to prevent them from slipping down so dangerous a declivity. It is clear that there is no work more worthy of being the object of the care and zeal of the true religion. Now, what religion but the Catholic Religion has fulfilled this duty? What other religion has more perfectly accomplished so salutary and difficult a task? Certainly not Protestantism, for it does not even know how to penetrate the depth of the reasons which guided the conduct of the Church on this point. Justice has been done in another place to the wisdom which Protestant society has displayed in not giving itself up entirely to the impulse which its chiefs wished to communicate to it. But it must not be supposed from this, that Protestant doctrines have not had lamentable consequences in countries calling themselves reformed. Let us hear what a Protestant lady, Madame de Staël, says in her book on Germany, speaking of a country which she loves and admires :—

Indissolubility of marriage a principle of security for society.

"Love," she says, "is a religion in Germany, but a poetical religion, which tolerates very freely all that sensibility can excuse. It cannot be denied that in the Protestant provinces the facility of divorce is injurious to the sanctity of marriage. THEY CHANGE HUSBANDS AS QUIETLY AS IF

Effects of Protestanism in reference to woman and to the sanctity of marriage.

THEY WERE ARRANGING THE INCIDENTS OF A DRAMA; the good nature of a man and woman prevents the mixture of any bitterness with their easy ruptures; and, as there is among the Germans more imagination than real passion, the most curious events take place with singular tranquillity. Yet it is thus that manners and characters lose all consistency; the paradoxical spirit destroys the most sacred institutions, and there are no well established rules on any subject." De l'Allemagne, p. 1, c. 3.) Misled by their hatred against the Roman Church, and, excited by their rage for innovation in all things, the Protestants thought they had made a great reform in secularizing marriage, so to speak, and in rejecting the Catholic doctrine, which declared it to be a real Sacrament. This is not the place to enter upon a dogmatical discussion of this matter; it is sufficient here to observe, that by depriving marriage of the august seal of a Sacrament, Protestantism showed that it had little knowledge of the human heart. To consider marriage, not as a simple civil contract, but as a real Sacrament, was to place it under the august shade of religion, and to raise it above the stormy atmosphere of passions; and who can doubt that this was absolutely necessary to restrain the most active, capricious, and violent passion of the heart of man? The civil laws are insufficient to produce such an effect. Motives are required, which, being drawn from a higher source, exert a more efficacious influence.

Protestantism deprived marriage of its holy sacramental character.

The usurpation of the civil power in regard to marriage a grand and fatal mistake.

The Protestant doctrine overturned the power of the Church with respect to marriage, and gave up matters exclusively to the civil power. Some one will, perhaps, think that the increase of the secular power on this point could not but serve the cause of civilization, and that to drive the ecclesiastical authority from the ground was a magnificent triumph gained over exploded prejudices, a valuable victory over unjust usurpation. Deluded man! If your mind possessed any lofty thought, if your heart felt the vibration of those harmonious chords which display the passions of man with so much delicacy and exactness, and teach the best means of directing them, you would see, you would feel, that to place marriage under the mantle of religion, and to withdraw it as much as possible from profane interference, was to purify, to embellish, and to surround it with the most enchanting beauty; for thus, is that precious treasure which is blasted by a look, and tarnished by the slightest breath, inviolably preserved. Would you not wish to have the nuptial bed veiled and strictly guarded by religion?

SECTION V.

Catholic Church and Divorce.

The Catholic Church and divorce.

But it will be said to Catholics, "Do you not see that your doctrines are too hard and rigorous? They do not consider the weakness and inconstancy of the human heart, and require

sacrifices above its strength. Is it not cruel to attempt to subject the most tender affections, the most delicate feelings, to the rigour of a principle?

Cruel doctrine, which endeavours to hold together, bound to each other by a fatal tie, those who no longer love, who feel a mutual disgust, who perhaps hate each other with a profound hatred! When you answer these two beings who long to be separated, who would rather die than remain united, with an eternal Never, showing them the divine seal which was placed upon their union at the solemn moment, do you not forget all the rules of prudence? Is not this to provoke despair? Protestantism, accommodating itself to our infirmity, accedes more easily to the demands, sometimes of caprice, but often also of weakness: its indulgence is a thousand times preferable to your rigour." This requires an answer: it is necessary to remove the delusion which produces these arguments, too apt, unhappily, to mislead the judgment, because they begin by seducing the heart. In the first place, it is an exaggeration to say that the Catholic system reduces unhappy couples to the extremity of despair.

Objections against the rigour of the Church in repressing divorce.

There are cases in which prudence requires that they should separate, and then neither the doctrines nor the practice of the Catholic Church oppose the separation. It is true that this does not dissolve the conjugal tie, and that neither of the parties can marry again. But it cannot be said that one of them is subject to tyranny.

They are not compelled to live together. Consequently they do not suffer the intolerable torment of remaining united when they abhor each other. "Very well, we shall be told, "the separation being pronounced, the parties are freed from the punishment of living together; but they cannot contract new ties, consequently, they are forbidden to gratify another passion which, perhaps, their heart conceals, and which may have been the cause of the disgust or the hatred whence arose the unhappiness or discord of their first union. Why not consider the marriage as altogether dissolved? Why should not the parties become entirely free? Permit them to obey the feelings of their hearts, which, newly fixed on another object, already foresee happier days." Here, no doubt, the answer seems difficult, and the force of the difficulty becomes urgent; but, nevertheless, it is here that Catholicity obtains the most signal triumph; it is here that it clearly shows how profound is its knowledge of the heart of man, how prudent its doctrines, and how wise and provident its conduct. Its rigour, which seems excessive, is only necessary severity; this conduct, far from meriting the reproach of cruelty, is a guarantee for the repose and well-being of man. But it is a thing which it is difficult to understand at first sight; thus we are compelled to develope this matter by entering into a profound examination of the principles which justify by the light of reason the conduct pursued by the Catholic Church. Let us examine this conduct, not

only in respect to marriage, but in all that relates to the direction of the heart of man.

Philosophical principles justifying the doctrine of the indissolubility of marriage.

In the direction of the passions there are two systems, the one of compliance, the other of resistance. In the first of these they are yielded to as they advance; an invincible obstacle is never opposed to them; they are never left without hope. A line is traced around them which, it is true, prevents them from exceeding a certain boundary; but they are given to understand that if they come to place their foot upon this limit it will retire a little further; so that the compliance is in proportion to the energy and obstinacy of their demands. In the second system, a line is equally marked out to the passions which they cannot pass; but it is a line fixed, immovable, and everywhere guarded by a wall of brass. In vain do they attempt to pass it; they have not even the shadow of hope; the principle which resists them will never change, will never consent to any kind of compromise. Therefore, no resource remains but to take that course which is always open to man—that of sin. The first system allows the fire to break out, to prevent an explosion; the second hinders the beginning of it, in the fear of being compelled to arrest its progress.

In the first, the passions are feared, and regulated at their birth, and hopes of restraining them when they have grown up are entertained. In the second, it is thought that, if it is difficult to restrain them when

they are feeble, it will be still more impossible when they are strengthened. In the one case they act on the supposition that the passions are weakened by indulgence; in the other, it is believed that gratification, far from satiating, only renders them every day more clamorous and rebellious.

The Catholic system of dealing with the passions.

It may be said, generally speaking, that Catholicity follows the second of these systems; that is to say, with respect to the passions, her constant rule is to check them at the first step, to deprive them of all hope from the first, and to stifle them, if possible, in their cradle. It must be observed that we speak here of the severity with respect to the passions themselves, not with respect to man, who is their prey; it is quite consistent to give no truce to passion, and yet to be indulgent towards the person under its influence; to be inexorable towards the offence, and to treat the offender with extreme mildness.

With respect to marriage, this system has been acted upon by Catholicity with astonishing firmness; Protestantism has taken the opposite course. Both are agreed on this point, that divorce, followed by the dissolution of the conjugal tie, is a very great evil; but there is this difference between them, that the Catholic system does not leave even the hope of a conjuncture in which this dissolution will be permitted; it forbids it absolutely, without any restriction; it declares it impossible.

Protestantism, on the contrary, consents to it in certain cases. Protestantism *does not possess the divine*

seal which guarantees the perpetuity of marriage, and renders it sacred and inviolable; Catholicity *does possess this seal. It impresses it on the mysterious tie, and from that moment marriage remains under the shadow of an august symbol.* Which of the two religions is the most prudent in this matter? Which acts with the most wisdom? To answer this question, let us lay aside the dogmatical reasons, and the intrinsical morality of the human actions which form the subject of the laws which we are now examining; and let us see which of the two systems is the most conducive to the difficult task of managing and directing the passions. After having considered the nature of the human heart, and consulted the experience of everyday life, it may be affirmed that the best way to repress a passion is to leave it without hope. To comply with it, to allow it continual indulgence, is to excite it more and more; it is to play with fire amid a heap of combustibles, by allowing the flame to be lighted from time to time, in the vain confidence of being always able to put out the conflagration. Let us take a rapid glance at the most violent passions of the heart of man, and observe what is their ordinary course, according to the system which is pursued in their regard. Look at the gambler, who is ruled by an indefinable restlessness, which is made up of an insatiable cupidity, and of an unbounded prodigality, at the same time. The most enormous fortune will not

Systems judged by examples.

Example of the passion of gambling.

satisfy him; and yet he risks all, without hesitation, in the hazard of a moment. The man who still dreams of immense treasures amid the most fearful misery, restlessly pursues an object which resembles gold, but which is not it, for the possession thereof does not satisfy him. His heart can only exist amid uncertainty, chances, and perils. Suspended between hope and fear, he seems to be pleased with the rapid succession of lively emotions which unceasingly agitate and torment him. What remedy will cure this malady—this devouring fever? Will you recommend to him a system of compliance? will you tell him to gamble, but only to a certain amount, at certain times, and in certain places? What will you gain by this? Nothing at all. If this method were good for anything, there would be no gambler in the world who would not be cured of his passion; for there is no one who has not often marked out for himself these limits, and often said to himself, "You shall only play till such an hour, in such a place, and to such an amount." What is the effect of these palliations—of these impotent precautions—on the unhappy gambler? He miserably deceives himself. The passion consents, only in order to gain strength, and the better to secure the victory. Thus it gains ground, it constantly enlarges its sphere, and leads its victim again into the same, or into greater, excesses. Do you wish to make a radical cure? If there be a remedy, it must be to abstain completely. The remedy may appear difficult at first, but will be

found the easiest in practice. When the passion finds itself deprived of all hope, it will begin to diminish, and in the end will disappear.

No man of experience will raise the least doubt as to the truth of what is here advanced; every one will agree that the only way to destroy the formidable passion of gambling is to deprive it at once of all food, to leave it without hope.

Example from the passion of love.

Let us pass to another example, more analogous to the subject which I intend to explain. Let us suppose a man under the influence of love. Do you believe that the best way to cure his passion will be to give him opportunities, even though very rare, of seeing the object of his passion? Do you think that it will be salutary to authorize him to *continue*, while you forbid him to *multiply* these dangerous interviews? Will such a precaution quench the flame which burns in his heart? You may be sure that it will not. The limits and restrictions imposed will even augment its force. If you allow it any food, even with the most parsimonious hand; if you permit it the least success, you will see it constantly increase, until it upsets every thing that opposes it. But take away all hope; send the lover on a long journey; or place before him an impediment which precludes the probability, or even the possibility, of success; then, except in very rare cases, you will obtain at first distraction, and then forgetfulness. Is not this the daily teaching of experience? Is it not the remedy

which necessity every day suggests to the fathers of families? The passions resemble fire. Flames are extinguished by a large quantity of water. A few drops only render them more ardent.

The passions in a time of revolution.

Let us raise our thoughts still higher; let us observe the passions acting in a wider field, in more extended regions. Whence comes it that so many strong passions are awakened at a time of public disturbance? Is it, because then, they all hope to be gratified? It is; because the highest ranks, the oldest and most powerful institutions, having been overturned, and replaced by others which were hitherto imperceptible, all the passions see a road before them amid the tempest and confusion; the barriers, before apparently insurmountable, the sight of which prevented their existence, or strangled them in the cradle, do not exist. As all is then unprotected and defenceless, it is only required to have boldness and intrepidity enough to stand amid the ruins of all that was old.

Example taken from hereditary monarchy.

Regarding things in the abstract, there is nothing more strikingly absurd than hereditary monarchy, by which the succession is secured to a family which at any time may place on the throne a child, a fool, or a wretch; and yet in practice there is nothing more wise, prudent, and provident. This has been taught by the long experience of ages. It has been shown by reason, and proved by the sad warnings of those nations who have

tried elective monarchy. Now what is the cause of this? It is what we are endeavouring to explain.

Hereditary monarchy precludes all the hopes of irregular ambition. Without that stability, society always contains a germ of trouble and a principle of revolt, which is nourished by those who conceive a hope of one day obtaining the command.

In quiet times, and under an hereditary monarchy, a subject, however rich, or however distinguished he may be for his talents or his valour, cannot, without madness, hope to be king; and such a thought never enters his head. But change the circumstances; admit, not merely the possibility, but the probability, of such an event, and there will immediately arise ardent candidates.

It would be easy to develope this doctrine more at length, and apply it to all the passions of man; but enough has been said to show that the first thing to be done when you have to subdue a passion, is to oppose it by an insurmountable barrier, which it can have no hope of passing. Then the passion rages for a little time, it rebels against the obstacle that resists it, but when it finds that obstacle to be immovable, it recedes; it is cast down; and, like the waves of the sea, it falls back, murmuring, to the level which has been marked out for it.

The passion of love.

There is a passion in the heart of man, a passion which exerts a powerful influence on the destinies of his life, and too often, by its

deceitful illusions, forms a long chain of sadness and misfortune.

This passion, which has for its necessary object the preservation of the human race, is found, in some form or other, in all the beings of nature ; but, inasmuch as it resides in the soul of an intelligent being, it assumes a peculiar character in man. In brutes, it is only an instinct limited to the preservation of the species. In man, the instinct becomes a passion, and that passion, enlivened by the fire of imagination, and rendered subtile by the powers of the mind, inconstant and capricious, because it is guided by a free will, which can indulge in as many whims as there are different impressions for the senses and the heart, is changed into a vague, fickle feeling, which is never contented, and which nothing can satisfy. Sometimes it is the restlessness of a man in a fever ; sometimes the frenzy of a madman ; sometimes a dream which ravishes the soul into regions of bliss ; sometimes the anguish and the convulsions of agony.

Who can describe the variety of forms under which this deceitful passion presents itself? Who can tell the number of snares which it lays for the steps of unhappy mortals ? Observe it at its birth, follow it in its career, up to the moment when it dies out like an expiring lamp. Hardly has the down appeared on the face of man, when there arises in his heart a mysterious feeling, which fills him with trouble and uneasiness, without his being aware of the cause. A pleasing

Time of youth.

melancholy glides into his heart, thoughts before unknown enter his mind, seductive images pervade his imagination, a secret attraction acts on his soul, unusual gravity appears in his features, all his inclinations take a new direction. The games of childhood no longer please him; everything discloses a new life, less innocent, less tranquil. The tempest does not yet rage, the sky is not darkened; but clouds, tinged with fire, are the sad presage of what is to come. When he becomes adolescent, that which was hitherto a feeling, vague, mysterious, incomprehensible, even to himself, becomes, from that time, more decided; objects are seen more clearly, they appear in their real nature, the passion sees, and seizes on them.

Delusions of the youthful imagination.

But do not imagine that it becomes more constant on that account. It is as vain, as changeable, as capricious, as the multitude of objects which, by turns, present themselves to it. It is constantly deluded, it pursues fleeting shadows, seeks a satisfaction which it never finds, and awaits a happiness which it never attains.

With an excited imagination, a burning heart, with his whole soul transported, and all his faculties subdued, the ardent young man is surrounded by a brilliant chain of illusions; he communicates these to all that environs him; he gives greater splendour to the light of heaven; he clothes the earth with richer verdure, and more brilliant colouring; he sheds on all the reflection of his own enchantment.

In manhood, when the thoughts are more grave and fixed; when the heart is more constant, the will more firm, and resolutions more lasting; when the conduct, which governs the destinies of life, is subjected to rule, and, as it were, confirmed in its faith; this mysterious passion continues to agitate the heart of man, and it torments him with unceasing disquietude. We only observe that the passion is become stronger and more energetic, owing to the development of the physical organisation. The pride which inspires man with independence of life, the feeling of greater strength, and the abundance of new powers, renders him more decided, bold, and violent; while the warnings and lessons of experience have made him more provident and crafty. We no longer see the candour of his earlier years. He now knows how to calculate; he is able to approach his object by covert ways, and to choose the surest means. Woe to the man who does not provide in time against such an enemy! His existence will be consumed by a fever of agitation, amid disquietudes and torments: if he does not die in the flower of his age, he will grow old still ruled by this fatal passion; it will accompany him to the tomb, surrounding him, in his last days, with those repulsive and hideous forms, which are exhibited in a countenance furrowed by years, and in eyes which are already veiled by the shades of death.

Need of principles of conduct for this time of youth.

What plan should be adopted to restrain this passion, and confine it within just

The Catholic principle—repression.

limits, and prevent its bringing misfortune to individuals, disorder to families, and confusion to society? The invariable rule of Catholicity, in the morality which it teaches, as well as in the institutions which she establishes, is *repression*. Catholicism does not allow a desire. She declares to be culpable in the eyes of God, even *a look when accompanied by an impure thought*. Why this severity? For two reasons; on account of the intrinsic morality which there is in this prohibition, and also because there is profound wisdom in stifling the evil at its birth.

It is certainly easier to prevent a man's consenting to evil desires, than it is to hinder his gratifying them when he has allowed them to enter his inflamed heart. There is profound reason in securing tranquility to the soul, by not allowing it to remain, like Tantalus, with the water at his burning lips, "Quid vis videre, quod non licet habere?" "Why do you wish to see that which you are forbidden to possess?" is the wise observation of the author of the admirable "Imitation of Christ," thus summing up, in a few words, all the prudence which is contained in the holy severity of the Christian doctrine.

The ties of marriage, by assigning a legitimate object to the passions, still do not dry up the source of agitation, and the capricious restlessness which the heart conceals. Possession cloys and disgusts, beauty fades and decays, the illusions vanish, and the charms disappear; man, in the presence of a reality which is

far from reaching the beauty of the dreams inspired by his ardent imagination, feels new desires arise in his heart; tired with what he possesses, he entertains new illusions; he seeks elsewhere the ideal happiness which he thought he had found, and quits the unpleasing reality which thus deceives his brightest hopes.

Give, then, the reins to the passions of man; allow him in any way to entertain the illusion that he can make himself any new ties; permit him to believe that he is not attached for ever, and without recall, to the companion of his life, and you will see that disgust will soon take possession of him; that discord will be more violent and striking; that the ties will begin to wear out before they are contracted; and will break at the first shock. PROCLAIM, ON THE CONTRARY, A LAW WHICH MAKES NO EXCEPTION OF POOR OR RICH, WEAK OR POWERFUL, VASSALS OR KINGS; WHICH MAKES NO ALLOWANCE FOR DIFFERENCE OF SITUATION, OF CHARACTER, HEALTH, OR ANY OF THOSE NUMBERLESS MOTIVES WHICH, IN THE HANDS OF PASSIONS, AND ESPECIALLY THOSE OF POWERFUL MEN, ARE EASILY CHANGED INTO PRETEXTS; PROCLAIM THAT THIS LAW IS FROM HEAVEN; SHOW A DIVINE SEAL ON THE MARRIAGE TIE; TELL THE MURMURING PASSIONS THAT IF THEY WILL GRATIFY THEMSELVES THEY MUST DO SO BY IMMORALITY; TELL THEM THAT THE POWER WHICH IS CHARGED WITH THE PRESERVATION OF THIS DIVINE LAW WILL NEVER MAKE CRIMINAL COMPLIANCES; THAT IT WILL NEVER DISPENSE WITH THE INFRACTION

OF THE DIVINE LAW; AND THAT THE CRIME WILL NEVER BE WITHOUT REMORSE; YOU WILL THEN SEE THE PASSIONS BECOME CALM AND RESIGNED; THE LAW WILL BE DIFFUSED AND STRENGTHENED; WILL TAKE ROOT IN CUSTOMS; YOU WILL HAVE SECURED THE GOOD ORDER AND TRANQUILLITY OF FAMILIES FOR EVER, AND SOCIETY WILL BE INDEBTED TO YOU FOR AN IMMENSE BENEFIT.

Now this is exactly what Catholicity has done, by efforts which lasted for ages: it is what Protestantism would have destroyed, if Europe had generally followed its doctrine and example; if the people had not been wiser than their deceitful guides.

Protestants and false philosophers, examining the doctrines and institutions of the Catholic Church through their prejudices and animosity, have not understood the admirable power of the two characteristics, impressed at all times, and in all places, on the ideas and works of Catholicity, viz.: *unity and fixity; unity in doctrine, and fixity in conduct.*

Catholicity points out an object, and wishes us to pursue it straightforward. It is a reproach to philosophers and Protestants, that, after having declaimed against unity of doctrine, they also declaimed against fixity of conduct. If they had reflected on man, they would have understood that this fixity is the secret of guiding and ruling him when desiring to restrain his passions, to exalt his mind, and to render him capable of great sacrifices and heroic actions. There is nothing

worse for man than uncertainty and indecision; nothing that weakens and tends more to make him useless. Indecision is to the will what scepticism is to the mind.

Give a man a definite object, and, if he will devote himself to it, he will attain it. Let him hesitate between two different ways, without a fixed rule to guide his conduct; let him be ignorant of his intention; let him not know whither he is going, and you will see his energy relax, his strength diminish, and he will stop. Do you know by what secret great minds govern the world? Do you know what renders them capable of heroic actions? And how all those who surround them are rendered so? It is that they have a fixed object, both for themselves and for others; it is that they see that object clearly, desire it ardently, strive after it directly, with firm hope and lively faith, without allowing any hesitation in themselves or in others. Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon, and the other heroes of ancient and modern times, no doubt exercised a fascinating influence by the ascendency of their genius; but the secret of this ascendency, the secret of their power, and of that force of impulse by which they surmounted all, was the unity of thought, the fixity of plan, which produced in them that invincible, irresistible character which gave them an immense superiority over other men. Thus Alexander passed the Granicus, undertook and completed his wonderful conquest of Asia; thus Cæsar passed the Rubicon, put

Pompey to flight, triumphed at Pharsalia, and made himself master of the world; thus did Napoleon disperse those who parleyed about the fate of France, conquered his enemies at Marengo, obtained the crown of Charlemagne, alarmed and astonished the world by the victories of Austerlitz and Jena.

Without unity there is no order; without fixity there is no stability: and, in the moral as in the physical world, without order and stability nothing prospers. Protestantism, which has pretended to advance the individual and society by destroying religious unity, has introduced into creeds and institutions the multiplicity and fickleness of private judgment; it has everywhere spread confusion and disorder; and has altered the nature of European civilisation by inoculating it with a disastrous principle which has caused, and will continue to cause, lamentable evils. And let it not be supposed that Catholicity, on account of the unity of her doctrines, and the fixity of her conduct, is opposed to the progress of ages. There is nothing to prevent that which is *one* from advancing, and there may be movement in a system which has some fixed points. The universe, whose grandeur astonishes us, whose prodigies fill us with admiration, whose beauty and variety enchant us, is united; is ruled by laws constant and fixed.

Conclusion. The wisdom of the Church in prohibiting divorce.

Behold some of the reasons which justify the strictness of Catholicity. Behold why she has not been able to comply with the

demands of a passion which, once let loose, has no boundary or barrier, introduces trouble into hearts, disorder into families, takes away the dignity of manners, dishonours the modesty of women, and lowers them from the noble rank of the companions of men. It is not denied that Catholicity is strict on this point; but she could not give up this strictness without renouncing at the same time the sublime functions of the depository of sound morality, and the duties of the vigilant sentinel which guards the destinies of humanity.

APPENDIX.

Loss of Souls—Causes of Danger.

Extract from the Census Report, made by the Rectors of Churches, in Manchester and Salford, by command of His Lordship the Bishop.

From a careful study of the Census Returns, it became evident that the various causes of misfortune to which children were exposed, were :—

1. Orphanage, from the loss of one or of both parents.

2. Pauperism, occasioned by illness and the visitation of God.

3. Drinking habits of parents, producing thriftlessness, poverty, religious indifference, and a general degradation of mind and body, in which the children participate.

4. Marriage entered upon as a mere contract, disregarded as a grace-giving Sacrament, received sacrilegiously in sin, without due religious preparation. The fruits of such unholy marriages constantly turn out ill.

5. Mixed marriages, which divide and weaken the religious influence of parents on their children, producing religious langour and indifference, and frequently ending in apostacy or entire loss of faith.

6. Worldliness of parents in conforming to the false maxims and wicked ways of the world. Faith languishes, Mass and Sacraments are neglected, ignorance prevails; the children are ruined by the example of their parents, or corrupted by bad companions whom they are allowed to associate with, and by their own unchecked evil inclinations.

7. The education of Catholic children under non-Catholic or anti-Catholic influences, and their isolation in service, while still young, among persons hostile to their faith.

All these causes of danger were grouped in three divisions:—

1. Irreligious Parents.
2. Mixed Marriages.
3. Careless and Indifferent Parents.

In the first category were classed, under the heading Extreme Danger, those children whose parents were never at Mass, never made their Easter Duties, and who were utterly callous of the religious welfare of their children; who, in their turn, never attended Mass, or attended a Catholic school.

The category of mixed marriages needs scarcely any explanation—the children being in danger through the influence exercised by the Protestant parent.

That of careless and indifferent parents, dealt with those children whose spiritual welfare was often neg-

lected, owing more to the influences of poverty and distress of their parents, than any irreligious tendencies.

The following tables show the result of the classification :—

Per Irreligious Parents :—

Age	Extreme Danger.	Great Danger.	Danger.
Under 6.....	1631	791	144
„ 15.....	1485	526	173
„ 21.....	731	177	80
	3847	1494	397
Total.....		5738.	

Per Mixed Marriages :—

Under 6.....	750	324	181
„ 15.....	645	199	160
„ 21.....	178	100	47
	1573	623	388
Total.....		2584.	

Per Careless and Indifferent Parents :—

Under 6.....	—	93	560
„ 15.....	—	94	411
„ 21.....	—	37	156
		224	1127
Total.....		1351.	

Census Returns, 1886.

The Appeal of the Bishop of Salford.

And now, dear priests and people of God, I have placed a great work, not of temporal but of eternal, not of worldly but of divine interest, briefly but frankly before you.—In the name of God take it up and make it your own. The Most Precious Blood of Jesus, more eloquent than the blood of Abel, pleads with you for mercy and co-operation. "Caritas Dei urget nos,"—let none be deaf to this supplication of God's love. We are answerable for the souls of our brethren while we have power to save them. Thousands of little orphans, of wastrels, of children abandoned to Satan, snatched up by the enemies of their faith, and exposed to eternal ruin, stretch out their tiny arms to you for protection and rescue. If you save them they will become your intercessors before the throne of God, they will be to you a crown of glory for ever. For myself, I confess that my soul has been saddened and racked with anxiety during these last months by the picture which has been constantly before me. For my own part, most gladly and gratefully will I give £1,000 to begin with; and I promise, if I live, to pay over the whole of the Episcopal *mensa* or income, for three years to come, and longer if needful, to the work which is before us. I pray that I may have no peace, I hope you will leave me no peace,—and I promise that

I will give the priests and the people no peace, till this work of saving the orphan, the wastrel and the child abandoned for destruction to Satan and his agents be accomplished.

THREE DISCOURSES.

DELIVERED BY THE REV. PERE MONSABRÉ, LENT, 1887.

(1.) On The Sanctity of Marriage. (2.) On The Nuptial Tie. (3.) On The Law of Divorce.

THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE.

First creative unions.

When God had consolidated the foundation of the earth, and had completed the organisation of its elements, He chose to ornament it by creating living forces, to which he gave the command to increase and multiply: crescite et multiplicamini. That brief epithalamium inaugurated universal nuptials, in the plains, on the mountains, in the air, and at the bottom of the waters, and they preceded, by long epochs, the appearance of mankind. God had thereby imparted to the things which he had created something of His own infinite power, and His own eternal vitality. In obedience to that Divine precept, individuals completed themselves, one by the other, in order to become a single principle of life. Associated with the fecundity of God, they perpetuated that which was to perish, and prolonged through space and time the efficacy of the creative act. But God had only ornamented the earth to prepare it to receive its King. "Let us make man," He said, "to be its master;" and He made man in His own image and

likeness, so grand, so beautiful, so perfect, that all living things were to come to his feet to acknowledge his empire over them, and to receive from him their fitting names. And then God created for man a helpmate, like unto himself; because man must imitate the principle of his life, the tendency of which is to communicate itself; because he could not keep for himself all the germs of life that God had put within him; because, according to the profound reflection of St. Thomas, the high functions of the human intellect must not be sacrificed to the lower functions from which the life of the body is born. Man had need of a helper in whom should reside the passive force of the generation of which he reserved, as the sovereign dispenser, the active force. When Adam awoke from the mysterious sleep in which God wrapt him when he made Eve from one of his ribs, he contemplated with admiration her whom he had seen in prophetic dream, and he realised that in her his perfection was accomplished. He was the intellect, she the heart; he was the thought, she the sentiment; he was the majesty, she the grace; he was the strength, she the softness; he was the commandment, she the insinuation; he was the sower of life, she the fertile ground in which life was to germinate. He felt exalted, and from his heart, filled with a new love, broke forth the celebrated nuptial song, which revealed to the coming world the essence and the holy laws of "Matrimony." Behold the bone of my bone, and the

The first marriage. Divine institution.

flesh of my flesh. She shall be given a name taken from the name of the man, for she has been drawn out from him. For this reason shall a man quit his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." To that cry of love God responded by a blessing, from which humanity sprung forth, and from which was received man's power over the beings which had been already blessed and rendered fecund. "Increase and multiply; fill the earth that it may be submissive to you; and have dominion over all it contains." Such was the first, the typical marriage. Consider well the essence of it, for it would be to that fundamental truth that the important questions of rights and duties which he purposed to treat had reference. According to current opinion, the essence of marriage was the exchange of two free acts, by which the man and the woman gave themselves one to the other in order to reproduce their own life, to create a family, and to complete themselves mutually in a common existence; that marriage was a pure and simple contract, the essence of which consisted in that reciprocal act by which the giving, and the accepting, of their persons was effected. That was an error.

That first marriage a contract.

Marriage was assuredly a contract—a contract which did not resemble other human conventions. It was the highest and the most complete example of a contract. Its ratification called for reverent witness and observance. What man transmitted under that contract was not one of his

inferior goods, but the accessories of his person, or his life. It was not his field, his house, his flock, his fortune, his work, his services, the fruit of his intellect and of his industry; it was himself, his own living person, and, with his person, the goods which depended upon, and were attached to it, and the most delicate and intimate rights connected with it. "Thou art mine! and I am thine!" was the cry which echoed through Eden, when the father and the mother of the human kind were married under the eye of God. Why did man and woman give themselves each to the other by their free will and consent? Was it solely to obey the divine command, that the creative act of which humanity is the issue should prolong itself throughout the ages? Was it solely for the happiness of seeing themselves live again in the offspring which resembled them? Was it solely for the honour of maintaining in the midst of human society a focus of life upon which their strength and existence depended? No. The multiplication of the species was indeed a function which honoured marriage; but then there was something higher, and still more delicate, to which conjugal union tended, and that was the mingling of two lives, so as to form one; the mutual perfecting of these two lives the one by the other; one intellect merging in another intellect; one heart in another heart (*cor unum et anima una*); one nature giving to, or borrowing from, another nature what it possessed, or what it wanted; qualities tempering and

Conjugal union in its highest sense.

equalising each other; virtues communicating from one to the other their harmonious shades and gradations, and all these perfectionings, not only for the benefit of those who acquired them, but for the benefit of the children which they were to bring up, after begetting them. For, to the material confinement succeeded another more noble and more laborious still—the birth of the intellectual, moral and religious life. It was to this work that the virtues of the two perfected lives of the man and the woman were to be applied, and that work was the sublime end of their contract. From the manner in which it was accomplished the influence of the motive which determined the union of wills and consents might be recognised. Between the man, the woman, and the child there was a partnership of love; it could only be established by love, not that love which was solely in the senses, that blind and weak passion which vanished when it was satisfied, but the love of the heart, of a circumspect heart, which reason illuminated; of a heart which was not foolishly smitten by fleeting charms, which the eyes alone could enjoy, but which sought in respect and esteem the basis of a faithful and lasting attachment.

Objects, ends, and motives of the matrimonial contract.

That was the matrimonial contract, in its object, its end, and its motive. They could thus see the difference between the two blessings by which God communicated His fecundity to living things. To plants and animals He simply said "Increase and multiply." That was enough.

The inanimate and silent flower shed unconsciously the fecundating dust which was to reproduce it; the animal obeyed fatal laws of instinct which urged it to select a mate; its fecundity was the fruit of a brutal connection, and its temporary union did not change its nature in any way. But to the man and the woman who put their reason and their heart into the choice of the being with whom they associated their life, who knew themselves to be participators in the creative action of God, who realised the great honour of begetting their kind, who perfected themselves, and communicated their perfection in conjugal society, who did not unite like living things of a lower species, but who married, God granted a more ample, a more magnificent blessing. He gave them not merely a command to multiply and a promise of fecundity, but He gave them dominion over all earthly life. Yet that contract was not the *essence* of marriage. If theologians had called marriage a contract, it was to declare its cause and not to determine its essence. What, then, it might be asked, was the essence? The answer was important, as it embodied the principle of the whole doctrine of marriage. The essence of marriage was the conjunction, the obligation, the tie resulting from the mutual consent and agreement. Marriage had, therefore, been defined by law as being the "marital conjunction of man and woman made between legitimate persons, who kept their bond in a common life." This definition had passed from law

The nuptial tie and not the contract the essence of marriage.

into theology, from theology into the typical catechism in which we must seek the correct ideas of Christian dogmas. It was the judicial and scholastic translation of the poetical exclamation of our first parent, when he cried: "Man shall quit his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh." Unlike other conventions in social life, the matrimonial contract, once made, could never be broken.

Mysterious power makes the marriage bond.

Husband and wife were bound together, not by the simple force of their wills, but by a mysterious power which had tied them one to the other in a common life from which they could never free themselves. That mysterious power was the hand of God, the Author of our being, who gave to the conjugal union a religious and sacred character, which men could not change. And his character was not an accident which was added to the contract, it sprang from the contract itself; it was the specific note that distinguished it from every other human convention, and placed it apart. It was on account of this that marriage was holy in its first institution. It is so, said a memorable "Encyclical," from its own force, naturally, and of itself. The divine institution of marriage, had for its aim, not only the reproduction of the human species, but the perpetuation of a race as holy as the couple who begot it. The pure joys and glories which would have existed in the married life, had men continued in the

state of innocence, could only be conjectured. For, alas! the union of our first parents did not long remain what God had made it. In his disobedience, man thwarted the designs of his Creator, and inflicted upon his nature a wound from which his whole race must suffer. Marriage did not cease to be a thing divine; it was long respected in the traditions of mankind. But, against the sacred remembrances which were transmitted from age to age, the passions of fallen nature rose up in conspiracy. They gained the upper hand, and the blessed laws of marriage were soon despised in every part of the world. To punish the woman, God had put upon her the terrible malediction·

Woman subject to man.

"Thou shalt be under the power of man, and he shall lord it over thee." Man took advantage of this divine malediction, to indulge in abominable excesses of injustice and cruelty. The chaste love, and the solemn promises of Paradise, were forgotten by him. Woman was no longer the inseparable companion of his life, for whom he should quit everything; the helpmate, who demanded from him an undivided heart; the bone of his bone, with whom he should make but one flesh. We see him become a sensual and implacable despot, multiplying his unions, repudiating, selling, giving, exchanging, treating as a slave, the mother of his children. No decent pen would dare to describe the dishonours of the conjugal union among the gentiles. One people had been separated from the gentiles in order to give its blood

to the Liberator whom the world awaited. As the custodian of the sacred traditions of humanity, it honoured marriage more than the other peoples; and yet, on account of the hardness of its heart, which exposed it to violence, calculated to bring destruction to the domestic fireside, God, its Master and Lord, had to relax the ties of the primitive institution. Abusing that indulgence, it took liberties which the vigorous formalities of the law could not restrain, and which tended to confound its manners with those of the gentiles. The divine institution was in danger of disappearing altogether. It was time that a God should come to restore it. Behold Him! He entered the world by the ineffable and eternal marriage of His nature with ours, and amongst the reparations which He meditated and undertook. He did not omit that of the conjugal companionship. In the early days of His public life He assisted at a wedding, and honoured it with the first of His miracles—a miracle figurative of His own marvellous transfiguration.

Jewish people and the marriage bond.

He desired to co-operate in the union of man and woman. At His command water was changed into wine; at His command the natural marriage, already holy, became a sacred sign amongst other divine institutions, a source of grace, a Sacrament. He did not yet state His design; and even, when soon afterwards questioned upon the delicate subject of divorce by the Pharisees, He evaded their snares by

Jesus present at the marriage in Cana.

bringing them back to the primitive institution of marriage. "Have you not read," he said, "that He who created man in the beginning created him one man only, and one woman only," and that He said: "The man shall quit his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. And I say, they are not two, but one flesh." And He sent them away with the grave and profound saying: "*Quod Deus conjunxit homo non separet*"—"What God hath joined together let no man put asunder." That declaration was pregnant with consequences. It was more than a protest against the disorders which dishonour the conjugal union; we see in it the promise of a grace which was to exalt the divine institution by making it enter into the sacred hierarchy of supernatural causes. The Apostles, the confidants of Christ, understood it thus, and the matrimonial doctrine which they taught by word of mouth St. Paul wrote down for the instruction of every future Christian generation. Heresy might twist those words of St. Paul as much as it liked, but it could never efface from history the interpretation given to them by the Holy Fathers. It could never hinder good sense from believing in the transformation and exaltation of marriage, on seeing it compared, in the apostolic teaching, to the mysterious and typical union of Christ with His Church. And this was why the Apostles called the union of husband and wife "a great Sacrament." One would not be the

The divine institution of marriage in the New Law.

type, nor the other the faithful copy, the symbol, and the sign, if there had not been in the latter, as in the former, a sanctifying virtue. Man would not love his wife as Christ loved the Church, nor would the wife love her husband as the Church loved Christ, without a grace which purified, ennobled, and supernaturalised love. In giving Himself to His Church, Christ sanctified it; man and woman in giving themselves to each other, mutually sanctify each other.

Marriage a great Sacrament.

Therefore, marriage is a "great Sacrament." But, even were the authority of the Apostle to be contested on this point, nevertheless, the truth must necessarily be admitted, to be contained in the universal and constant tradition of the Church, which was, and could only be, an echo of the Apostolic doctrines. Now, in the language of tradition, "Marriage is an union sealed by the blessing of God. It does not suffice that the mutual consent should unite the married parties, and that the persons give themselves to each other; the Author of Grace must intervene. In virtue of His intervention, the union is sanctifying and sanctified; Divine grace penetrates it, consolidates it, tightens the bonds. It is a Sacrament, and, in the Christian nuptials, the sanctity of the Sacrament is of more account than the fecundity of the womb." And the Council of Trent, exterminating an impious error, said: "If anyone says that marriage is not, truly and properly, one of the seven Sacraments of evangelical law, instituted by Christ, Our Lord, but

that it has been invented in the Church, by men, and that it does not confer grace, let him be anathema." The Council, it should be observed, did not say that there was in marriage a Sacrament, but that marriage itself was a Sacrament. Those words are very important ones. They protected the conjugal union against civil usurpations, and they taught us that these two things could not be separated—the human act, by which man and woman gave themselves one to the other, and the divine act, by which grace was conferred. This Sacrament, as a learned theologian had said, did not pass away. It remained, like the ineffable mystery which we adore on our altars, and in our tabernacles. As the Eucharistic species remained after the act which consecrated them, as the symbol of the spiritual aliment which they contained, so the common life of Christian husbands and wives, the sensible manifestations of the tie which bound them, remained as the symbol of the indissoluble union of Christ and the Church, of which it is a copy. That, again, was why St. Paul called marriage a "great Sacrament." Moreover, this Sacrament preserved the conjugal tie with all the efficacy which the exchange of oaths had given it. It was not only in front of the altar that it produced the grace of God, but it kept the power to produce it for every circumstance and every time, in which the common life of the husband and wife required it. And what grace! The Holy Council of Trent described it in words which

Civil usurpation.

Marriage a continued holy state.

left nothing wanting. "It is a grace which perfects natural love, consolidates the union into absolute indissolubility, and sanctifies the couple." Natural love allowed itself to be infatuated with fragile charms, which the cruel hand of time never spared. Day after day that pitiless ravager of human beauty did its work.

Efficacy of the sacramental grace.

It effaced the radiant hues of youth, deformed the features, wrinkled the brow, whitened the hair, bent the body, destroyed, one after another, the attractions that appealed to the eye, and, in the end, we had before us but a disfigured idol, which made the too feeble heart regret its foolish love. Natural love, however well founded upon respect and esteem, did not always resist the sudden revelations which exposed to our view imperfections, faults, and vices, of which we had not dreamed.

Disturbed security and menaced peace discouraged the poor heart that thought itself so deeply confirmed, and invited it to love no longer. Natural love in a fallen being, the slave, often, of his passions, grew tired of remaining attached to the same object. Inconstancy and caprice turned it only too easily, alas! towards other objects, and caused it to forget its existing duties and solemn obligations. At all times marriage had suffered from that lamentable weakness; but since Christ had sanctified it love was perfected by grace. By grace love became wise, and learned that nothing was faultless here below, that the infinite beauty of God was the only ideal capable of contenting

a heart seeking after perfection ; that when we had not all we wanted to love, we should love that which we had. Grace purified the eyes of nature, rendered deformities and infirmities bearable and pitiable, age and gray hairs venerable and lovable ; grace made love patient, faithful, dutiful, and merciful, and taught us that in the dual life of marriage, more than anywhere else, we should put into practice the evangelical maxim, "Bear ye one another's burdens." Instead of reproaches it suggested excuses. It changed recriminations into good counsels, sage exhortations, sweet encouragements, gentle corrections. It inclined the heart, which it softened, to forgive readily. The perfecting of natural love by grace was a strong guarantee of solidity for the conjugal bond ; but the sacramental action went still further in making it firm and durable. Grace, in fine, sanctified those who married ; it penetrated them to the very source of life ; it rendered good, chaste, and worthy of respect that which might startle and repel virtue ; it made them seek in the appeasement of the senses the great honour of participating in the creative action of God, and of bestowing life ; the great duty of peopling the earth with Christians and Heaven with elect.

SECOND DISCOURSE.

The Marriage Tie.

Married bond for life.

The indissoluble unity of the conjugal bond is a divine law. That law is, in the order of nature, a law of progress and of perfection. God, the principle of life, had in the beginning spread life throughout the world with immense liberality; but He had not abandoned it to itself. He had regulated its evolutions, and had determined the conditions of the fecund unions by which life was to be propagated. For here He was the absolute Master, and that which He willed became the law of the beings whom He associated with His creative action. Now, when God had separated from all other living things, the two privileged beings to whom He gave dominion over the world, and who were to become the progenitors of a race marked with the seal of the divine likeness, He willed that they should be indissolubly united, the one to the other. If He had not expressed His will verbally as He had done in regard to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, He nevertheless spoke of His design secretly to the heart of the first man, and it was by a divine instinct that the father of mankind had pronounced the celebrated words: "Behold the bone of my bone and the flesh of my flesh." A name shall be given to her taken from the name of the man, for she hath been

drawn out from him. "For this reason shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be two in one flesh." "Let them understand, *two and no more.* And those two must adhere the one to the other as the bone and the flesh of Adam, of which his wife was formed, adhered to his body: Quamobrem adhærebit homo uxori suæ." Such is the will of God, said Tertullian, manifested in those typical nuptials, the form of which ought to be imitated of all men. The law was not yet express and imperious, as it afterwards became, but the generations who were the issue of the primitive couple recognised its implicit authority, and for ages the indissoluble unity of the conjugal bond was the rule of those who founded families and multiplied the human race. The first who violated it was a blood-thirsty man, a man accursed. It mattered not that in reconstituted humanity after the universal catastrophe which drowned the whole world, polygamy should have been established; it mattered not that the legislation of the Jewish people should have permitted in certain cases the rupture of the conjugal bond; it mattered not that God should have tolerated for a time these practices which frustrated his design, the primitive institution subsisted, it awaited and expected better days. But during that interval God, the Author of nature, and the Legislator of human life, exercised His supreme power and authority, as Lord and Master, in permitting

Two in one flesh.

Polygamy and divorce.

the relaxation of the bonds of a law to which He had not yet given its definite form. He knew best why He tolerated acts which neither the positive law, nor the first principle of natural right, manifestly defended. Whether, for the success of His plan, He wished to accelerate the multiplication of families and of nations; whether He wished to establish the equilibrium of the sexes, disturbed by the influences of sin; whether He wished to spare His people the domestic crimes to which the impetuosity of its passions, and the hardness of its heart, exposed it; whether He wished to allow mankind to experience the disorders to which the depraved senses could lead it when it grew weak and feeble, it was not for us to judge. His tolerance did did not excuse the license which passion took against the will of lawful wives, and for dishonourable ends. And, in his tolerance, respecting the generations of antiquity, God did not forget His first design in the institution of marriage. We might say of the indissoluble unity of the conjugal bond, what St. Paul had said of God Himself: Non sine testimonio semetipsum reliquit. God did not leave it without a testimony. As, amid the darkness of idolatry, the existence of the True God was affirmed by proofs so evident that reason was inexcusable in not submitting to them, so in the universal decline of marriage, unity and indissolubility were affirmed and protected by facts and teaching which connected the Christian restoration with the primitive institution. It was easy to divine from the

language of the Scripture to which side the law of nature and the preference of God inclined. In this respect the historical, lyrical, sapient, and prophetic books teemed with most valuable indications. "We are the children of saints," said young Tobias to her whom he espoused. "We cannot marry as do the Gentiles, who know not God. O Lord! God of our fathers! Thou who madest Adam from the clay of the earth, and gavest him Eve for companion. Thou knowest that it is not a low passion that urgeth me to marriage, but the love of posterity which should bless Thy name for ever and ever." And Sarah completed that touching prayer, "Have mercy upon us, so that we may grow old together, healthy of body and soul!" It was the single wife and the faithful spouse that wisdom praised. It was the mystical marriage which would become the type of Christian nuptials which the Song of Songs celebrated. Moses had accorded the act of repudiation, but that act was surrounded by a large number of legal precautions, which might be considered as so many protests of God's desire against His indulgence; and those who took advantage of that indulgence during the long period which elapsed from the Exodus to the Captivity were so few, and concealed themselves so well, that sacred history did not speak of them. Amongst the people in whose midst the Word of God was not heard there were those who remained obstinately monogamous; and

The law of God and of Nature approved of unity and indissolubility.

Monogamy.

there were even barbarians who merited this praise from a great historian: "Their virgins marry but one man only, to make with him one body only, and one life only. Their thoughts and their desires go no further, for it is their marriage that they love rather than a husband." An old Indian legislator wrote: "Man and woman make but one single person. . . . . The wife is man's companion for life and death." And when the kingly people dishonoured itself by capricious and infamous divorces which disturbed the whole of Roman society, it did not yet efface from its law this noble definition of marriage. "Common participation in the same divine and human right; union for life in the same lot; state and custom of two lives which make no more than one." It was impossible to teach more clearly than the Son of God Himself, the spouse of our nature, had taught in His reply to the Pharisees, that the Creator, in the primitive institution of marriage, had in view the indissoluble unity of the conjugal bond; that this indissoluble unity was explicitly desired and commanded in the New Law; that it suffered no more exceptions; that tolerance had come to an end; that dispensations were abolished for ever. Even the crimes which might authorise a separation did not break the tie which bound two lives together when they were married; and, as Christ had said, the wife sent away from the conjugal bed or roof on account of her infidelity, could not be replaced except by an adultery.

In the New Law Divorce not permitted.

That was hard for carnal man, but it was the law of the New World created by the Redeemer. It was the law which St. Paul promulgated in the churches of Rome and of Corinth for the guidance of the whole world. By the law of marriage the wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. . . . If she weds another man during the lifetime of her husband, she will be called an adulteress. . . . "Hear me, you who are married; it is not I who command, but God Himself. Let not the wife separate herself from her husband. If she is separated from him let her remain single, or let her be reconciled. Neither can the husband separate himself from his wife." It was the law. The successors of Apostles, the Fathers of the Church, the doctors of the people drove away before them the last resistance of Judaism and paganism, the edicts and license of the princes of the earth, in the name of the indissoluble unity re-established by Christ. "Monogamy," they said, "has entered into and become part of the manners of Christians. No more polygamy; Christ has abolished it. We know but one bond of marriage. One wife only, or none at all—that is the Christian device. As long as the man lives, be he charged with every crime, he remains the husband of the wife he has wed. Such is the design of the Sacrament. Do not speak to us of divorce laws framed by the secular powers. It is not by those laws that we shall be judged, but by the laws that God has made. The laws of Cæsar are not the laws of Christ; what

Papinian permits is one thing, what our great Paul forbids is another. Hear the law of God, to whom those are bound to submit who make the laws. "What God joins let no man put asunder." That is the law. The Supreme Pontiffs brought it back, with sovereign authority, to the minds of kings and peoples who had the hardihood to try and escape from it. They declared it to be the law. All the thelogical schools proclaimed and commented upon it. In spite of the resistance of nature and of human powers it established itself wherever Catholic churches were founded. When fifteen centuries old it reigned without question or contest at the epoch when Luther inaugurated the age of moral decadence, which tended to drag down again the world regenerated by Christ to the loose and corrupt manners of the ancients. Seeing the danger with which the licence and dissoluteness defended by Luther threatened the Christian family, the Church, ever attentive to the spiritual interests of its children, defined the dogmatic formula of the law, and put it under the protection of the anathema.

No justification for divorce.

"Anathema," said the Council of Trent, "to those who permit Christians to have several wives, as if that was not forbidden by any divine law. Anathema to those who maintain that the conjugal bond may be broken. Anathema to those who accuse of error the infallible authority of the Church when she affirms that even adultery has not the power to dissolve the union which God has made." That was the law. Its

origin was not doubtful. It was God Himself who had promulgated it, implicitly and prophetically, at the beginning of time, explicitly and definitely at the solemn epoch when the world was redeemed. Armed with the same power as that which drew the physical world from nothing, filled it with life, and gave to life, together with the power to multiply itself, the rules of fecundity, Jesus Christ, the creator of a moral and religious world, to which He communicated a new life by the inoculation of His merits and his blood, had certainly the right to regulate the conditions of the unions from which a holy race was to be born. In doing this He did nothing strange. He connected the regeneration of humanity to its immaculate creation by passing over the ages that sin had dishonoured. He determined, defined, fixed by an absolute law the divine designs which should originally have progressed without flaw or opposition in the human race, if it had preserved its primitive innocence. That was His right as creator. It was also His right as redeemer. To redeem the world He had humiliated the divine majesty even to uniting it with our fallen nature—a union full of suffering, which was to be for us a source of life and glory. Was it not just that He should make human families repay Him by the austere yoke of unity and indissolubility for the fruitful abasements attendant upon His incarnation? It was also His right as benefactor. In redeeming man, Christ

This renewed indissolubility the work of Christ in the New Law.

transformed him. To every phase of his spiritual life, He applied grace. It was grace that supernaturally engendered him; it was grace that increased and fortified him; it was grace that nourished and restored him; it was grace that cured him of his faults, and reconciled him with God; it was grace that completed his purification, and opened to him the gates of eternity; it was grace that gave him a dignity and divine powers in the priesthood; it was grace that united him to her whom he had chosen as the companion of his life. By sanctifying that union, had not Christ the right to be exacting? And, if the indissoluble unity of the conjugal bond demanded efforts and sacrifices from husband and wife, could they complain without being ungrateful, since divine virtue, which ennobled their yoke, gave them the courage and the strength to bear its sacred burden until death, if they received it with a pure heart?

The legislation of the conjugal bond was in fine, the right of Christ in His quality of Exemplar. The man was the image and likeness of God; the Christian was the image and likeness of Christ. He ought to be so in all things. Now, as the marriage of Christ with His Church had for its property indissoluble unity in perfect love, so it was with the marriage of the Christian with the wife he espoused; so that on one side as on the other we could say with the Apostle:—"Here is a great mystery." Mysterium hoc magnum est. Yes,

Christ and the Church a figure of the Christian marriage.

a great mystery. And, in the shadows of that great mystery, their Christian souls should submit to the certain law of God, even though they saw in the world of nature, no aspirations, and no right, which justified its holy austerity. But it was not so. Nature gave to the law of indissoluble unity its full acquiescence; for it was a law of progress, and of perfection. Let them make no mistake about that word, nature, for the vast majority of those whom the indissoluble unity of the marriage bond revolted, did not understand it as we did. For them, nature did not pass beyond the dark and troubled region of the appetites; and, in fact, it was of the human animal, more than anything else, that their minds were occupied in the question of marriage. Everything that hindered them from gratifying it; everything that obliged them to obey a nobler power; was regarded with disfavour by their materialistic philosophy. To oppose the animal was to oppose nature. It was not thus that we understood it. For us nature was the whole man—the carnal man with his appetites, the spiritual man with his reason, his heart, his free activity, his intelligence of duty, his aptitudes for virtue. God had created that man perfect, and master of the world. He owned that to obey the divine command, which desired his reproduction, he should distinguish himself by the most perfect of unions. What was that union? In the lowest scale of living beings, the union which predominated was the union of all with all, promiscuously.

Marriage union the highest union.

At the summit of all unions was the union of one with one and for ever, monogamy the true marriage, the perfect state in which were realised the conditions of intimacy and stability, indicated by the word union, understood in its highest and most absolute sense. To any one who could appreciate order, progress, and perfection, it was clear that God responded to a wish of nature and to the appeal of the royal prerogatives of man when He imposed on the two first parents of our race the law of the indissoluble unity of the conjugal bond, and thus placed the generation of the most perfect of living beings in dependence upon a perfect union. It was clear that man fell from the height, where he claimed superiority over nature, when he began to imitate in marriage the unions of inferior beings. It was clear that Christ brought humanity back to the way of progress and perfection when he restored the primitive institution of marriage, and promulgated explicitly and definitively the law of its indissoluble unity.

The life-long bond, the law of progress and perfection.

Let them enter into human life itself, let them there apply the law to it. They would see that it was right in calling it a law of progress and perfection. It was indeed the law which befitted true love; it was a school of virtues; it was the cement of the family, and the honour of human societies. No one could honestly explain to himself the total giving of themselves the one to the other by two human beings, without seeking its cause in the

deep and powerful sentiment which made the heart throb, and which they called love.

We need not blush to speak of it, for, if men had soiled it, God had purified it. It was noble and grand in the heart of our first father, when he called to his arms the bone of his bones, the flesh of his flesh ; it could be noble and grand in the hearts of those who, like our first parents, espoused each other under the eye of God. Let them not seek it in that feverish passion of which carnal beauty provoked the transports, a passion as strong and as fleeting as a tempest, too strained not to fatigue the soul, too much attached to perishable attractions not to disappear with them. True love knew how to disengage itself from the senses, and become enamoured of the immaterial beauties over which time and the forces of nature had no power. It did not allow itself to be taken unawares, but it chose its object, and when it had chosen it, it said to itself, "There is my repose for ever." Haec requies in saeculum soeculi. It was "union" that it desired, sought, and wished ; the union, intimate, profound, total, so energetically expressed by that sentence in our sacred books :— "Two in one flesh." The more its rights were extended the more it realised the extension of its duties. "I am yours and you are mine entirely and for ever," it would say. "Our two lives are but one until death. Grace is frail, and beauty fleeting—fallax gratia et vana est pulchritudo. But if grace and

Qualities to be admired and sought.

beauty have been allurements for me, there are other good qualities that I covet, pursue, esteem, and love. Over the ruins of the charms that are seductive, and speak to the senses, these good qualities seem to me more beautiful, more desirable, more worthy of attachment. Let us allow what is perishable to pass away, and let us love each other forever." Was it not thus that they understood and felt true love? Was it not thus that noble hearts understood and felt it? Was it not useless to seek any longer the law that suited that love in the conjugal union? It rose up spontaneously before it; it was the law of the indissoluble union. Let the father protect the woman who devoted herself night and day to the tiny being to whom he had given life, and let the mother accomplish, without disturbance and fear, her noble task of devotion; both parents united, to pour into the infant soul the light of their reason and the tenderness of their hearts; united, to sow

Education of children for God.

in that virgin soul the seeds of the virtues without which man had no right to live; united to cultivate together the sacred germs they had planted, to serve as a model to those who would unite after them, and to cement by their unalterable fidelity the holy unity of the family. Who had the right to retard the progress of humanity when it was God who urged it forward? Contemptible reformers, you lie to yourselves, for in all your utterances we hear you say that you are men of progress.

You men of progress! and you make a mockery of a law which gives to true love the satisfaction that it desires, places man in the happy necessity of perfecting his moral life, consolidating the family, and assuring to human society the elements of a glorious existence! You men of progress! and you aspire to bring us back to the time when fallen man imitated in his marriage the imperfect unions of the inferior species! You men of progress! and you resist the divine impulse which tends to raise generating man from a state of animality in order to replace him upon the height from which he exercised dominion over all nature! Be silent rather than utter falsehoods! The men of progress are the Apostles, and the faithful observers of the indissoluble unity of the conjugal bond.

Christ, having now placed before the eyes of mankind that lesser humanity which approached the condition of the brute, because it had not been faithful to the primitive institution of marriage, had said to them: *Ascende superius!*—"Go up higher!" And, obeying the noble aspirations of nature, and, at the same time, the voice of God, they have generously responded: *Ascendamus!*—"Let us go up higher!"

THIRD DISCOURSE.

The Law of Divorce.

Divine law of unity and indissolubility.

The properties of unity and indissolubility, consolidated by a divine law, and by the grace of the Sacrament, responded to a desire of nature, which asked for the most perfect of generators, the most perfect of unions, and which urged on the individual, the family, and society, towards progress and perfection. Generous souls were in sympathy with that doctrine; but since it had encountered, from pretended reformers of the conjugal state, an opposition and a contradiction which might disturb and perplex, it became a duty to guage the value of that opposition and that contradiction. It may be admitted, to the honour of the adversaries of the divine law, that they have no intention of reviving the ancient manners which Luther permitted to people of rank. They are in accord with Catholics with regard to the eminently progressive character of monogamy, as they are with regard to the disadvantages and inconveniences of polygamy. In the latter state, man abandoned himself to the exciting pleasures of sensation, to the detriment of his moral and intellectual life, and to the debasement of his dignity. Woman became the servant, nay the slave, of a low passion; the human family resembled a herd that was agitated and divided by jealousies and conflicts. Polygamy degraded the human being to the level of animality.

Polygamy. The state of woman.

Eighteen centuries of Christianity had rendered us so unaccustomed to that matrimonial condition, that the most determined enemies of the Christian law regarded it with the same disdain and disgust as we did the harems of the East, and the licentious follies of the Mormons. But it was otherwise when it was a question of the indissolubility of the conjugal bond. In the opinion of a great many people who since the impious declarations of the Reformation, had taken to philosophising and legislating, the indissolubility of the conjugal bond, was a tyrannous law, which ought to be amended for the relief of modern society, by the concession of power to throw aside a yoke which human nature was unable to bear. What, then, are the reasons which are invoked against the divine law? Divorce, by which it was proposed to replace the divine law, was worse than all the evils for which it was sought to make indissolubility responsible; it was a principle of decay for human society. When special decrees were made for individuals they were proportioned to their capacities. Law had not that restricted character. They had regard to the general good, and were made for the many. That in their application to the individual, they carried inconveniences with them, and imposed, here and there, a greater constraint, was no reason why they should be abrogated as long as they made human society advance in the path of progress and perfection. Such was the law of indissolubility. It was a duly

Advocates of divorce.

The law of indissolubility regarded the general good.

established law, ordained, as they had seen, for the perfection of our nature and for the general good of humanity. That the individual should suffer hardship under it sometimes, was not astonishing; that that hardship should be made a pretext for evading the law was absurd. Were they to admit the principle, that a law might and ought to be suppressed, because it became inconvenient in some of its special applications, they would render all order and all morality impossible. Yet it was thus, in some respects, that the adversaries of indissolubility proceeded. They singled out, with great care, the inconveniences of the divine law; they even invented some, in order to increase the sum of their grievances. Without entering into the details of all these grievances, it would be sufficient, in order to examine them fairly, to reduce them to three heads:—1. It was contended that the law of indissolubility outraged human liberty, which it bound in a sort of slavery. 2. The law of indissolubility tended to strip marriage of its principal object. 3. the law of indissolubility exposed those whom it irrevocably united, to be deprived, unjustly and hopelessly, of the happiness to which they had a right, on entering the conjugal state; it exasperated them, and urged them to crime. These reasons, and the objections which the adversaries of the law had offered, were black enough, indeed, but were they real? Statistics did not show marriage in such sombre colours in countries where

Objections raised against the law of indissolubility.

the indissolubility of the conjugal bond was religiously respected. He did not deny the imperfections of poor human nature. When these imperfections were wed, it was not surprising that they should be troublesome to each other, and that those who had united them should experience certain inconveniences. But that did not develop regularly into a catastrophe, nor even into a misfortune. The greater number of marriages resembled those temperate regions where the barometer oscillated between "tempest" and "set fair." These oscillations might be disagreeable, but not so far as to make us wish to quit our favoured climates in order to seek refuge at the poles, in the tropics, or at the equator. Strained and violent situations were the exception. It was not upon the law that the responsibility for them should be laid, but rather upon those who criminally or wantonly created them. An author who was too fond of paradoxical theses, and who had made himself a name in reference to the question of divorce, had recently written :—

Difficulties in monogamy not denied.

"The reason why, in general, we hardly pity the sorrows and mishaps of the married man, is because he is only experiencing deceptions easy to foresee. . . . . All the misfortunes are more or less voluntary. We wanted to be happier than we were, and we made a mistake. . . . . And then we complain of destiny, of circumstances, of others, but never of ourselves. And yet, we, alone, are really guilty. This is why,

with our natural selfishness superadded, we weary those to whom we relate our misfortunes." The measures of responsibility, in the case of divorce, which would revert to the unhappy husband and wife, will be better understood when the profanations of marriage come to be considered. Those profanations were the cause of the vast majority of the ills which were complained of, and which made indissolubility a yoke that was insupportable. If that yoke weighed too heavily upon the shoulders of the guilty, had they the right to say it was barbarous? No. Its rigours were justice. The law turned against those who had defied it, and became their chastisement. They might revolt against that chastisement, they might yield to the temptation of terminating it by a crime; the law of indissolubility was no more responsible for that crime than the law which forbade robbery was responsible for the murder committed by a robber when he could not obtain possession of the purse without taking the life of his victim. Here it should be observed that it is not necessary, in order to set the law at defiance, to enter the marriage state with formally criminal intentions. It is sufficient to forget, blinded by pleasure or by personal interest, that there are serious duties to be fulfilled, and that preparation should be made for their performance by generous and holy resolutions. In this respect he did not hesitate to say that they would find few innocent persons amongst husbands and wives who were unhappy. If that were

Profanations of marriage, the real difficulty.

so, the law was not obliged to bend before their unhappiness, because it was a general law, a far-seeing law, a law that was supremely important, a law of individual, domestic, and social perfection. It demanded from those who were innocent the sacrifice of the happiness for which they had hoped. The hour had come for them to accomplish a great act of abnegation and devotion, and the hour also came for the soldier to die beneath the enemy's bullets when he went forth to battle for the welfare of his native land. Do not refuse them that honour, do not tamper, by sacrilegious licences, with the grand law of sacrifice on which the glory and the very existence of society depended. The sacrifice was, no doubt, hard, and the innocent individual might well ask himself why the law immolated him. But there was an element that should be taken into account in that critical situation; it was the grace which God added to His law to anticipate the remissness of nature. The Christian might suffer from the yoke of indissolubility; he was not crushed by it, for grace became all the stronger and all the more active because he was the more unhappy. It sustained him, it fortified him, it consoled him, it taught him the divine art of making his sufferings beneficent, even to those who made him suffer; and upon the ruins of the happiness for which the poor heart had hoped, it made it taste the austere and noble joys of an immolation glorious to God, and more useful to society than

The law of self-sacrifice.

The grace of the Sacrament.

sanguinary sacrifices. As to those who did not want to take grace into their consideration, it would be well to consider whether it was desirable to accept the remedy which the adversaries of the divine law proposed to them. Divorce was worse than all the ills for which it was sought to make indissolubility responsible, and consequently it was a principle of decadence. No one had expressed that truth more forcibly than the Infallible Doctor who now governed the Church, the Sovereign Pontiff Leo XIII., in his Encyclical upon Christian Marriage. "The great evils," said his Holiness, "of which divorce is the spring can hardly be enumerated. When the conjugal bond loses its immutability, we may expect to see benevolence and affection destroyed between husband and wife; an encouragement given to infidelity; the protection and education of children rendered more difficult; the germs of discord sown between families; woman's dignity disowned; the danger for her of seeing herself forsaken, after having served as the instrument of man's passions. And as nothing ruins families and destroys the most powerful kingdoms like the corruption of manners, it is easy to see that divorce, which is only begotten of the depraved manners of a people, is the worst enemy of families and states, and that it opens the door, as experience attests, to the most vicious habits, both in private and public life." Thus, accord-

Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII.

ing to that august declaration, everything suffered from divorce;—marriage itself, those who married, the children, the families, all society. When it became a contract liable to be annulled, marriage was no longer hedged round by salutary precautions, which should assure its peace and its durability. It was not, in fact, a question of founding a new system, but of entering upon an adventure. In such an undertaking, hardihood and audacity might have full swing. What purpose was served by the precautions of delicacy and prudence, since there was no intention of establishing a household to last for life? If the ground upon which one was engaged was not solid, one went elsewhere. It were useless to appeal to that sweet and profound sentiment which mingled hearts together; which sought and promised eternity. The appetite and the senses were enough for him who only wanted to bind himself for a time. Marriage was no longer the junction of two lives which confided in each other, completed and perfected each other, in a permanent union; it was a terminable partnership in which distrust keeps its rights, and, as had been forcibly said, it was a sort of legal prostitution to which man and woman gave themselves, only to lower and degrade themselves. Instead of indissolubility, which developed the moral life by obliging man to make generous efforts in order to correct his nature and sustain bravely the accidents of the common life, they had divorce, which debased,

Divorce the source of innumerable ills.

because it did not oblige, him, to make any efforts, and left to selfishness and caprice their fullest freedom. To be amiable, gentle, benevolent, and prudent, would cost some effort. But why make the endeavour? why constrain oneself? There was no reason to restrain wanton violation of the feelings of those of whose presence one wished to be rid. That perspective allowed all faults to come into collision; and thus, such a state of tumult was produced, that those who engaged in it could say that life was intolerable, and that they would no longer endure it.

The sanctions of divorce prompted men and women to commit every irregularity.

With perfidious calculation, ill-usage and brutality would be increased with a view to tiring out him or her who was no longer cared for, no longer wanted. What became of the blessed conjugal fidelity in that household disturbed by the constant desire of a rupture? Indissolubility protected it against the temptations which drew love towards another object. To him who was troubled by an adulterous passion it said: "Take care, thou no longer belongest to thyself." Divorce, on the contrary, encouraged the unfaithful heart, and said to it: "Go where love calls thee, thou canst take thyself away." And, precisely because adultery was one of the major causes which could determine the rupture of the conjugal bond, a trade was made of it; it was meditated; it was prepared; it was consummated in the damnable hope of using it as a means of gaining freedom. And thus it was that the man and the

woman, who might have been so great and noble, under the law of indissolubility lowered and degraded themselves under the law of divorce. Woman, especially woman, whose dignity was raised by Christianity, and whom our fathers associated in their reverence with their God and their King—"Evil," they said, "be to him who betrays his God and his lady!"—became, in a case of divorce, much more than man, the victim of the debasement, which divorce brought in its train. Man could leave the conjugal partnership with all the advantages of his strength and authority, to enter upon new ties; woman could not leave it with all her dignity. She left behind her, her best possessions—the first fruits of her honour and the charms of her youth.

Former estimate of woman.

A withered plant, whose sap had been taken away by an impure animal, and placed outside the family to which she had given birth, when she could no longer hope to found another, who would care to take her? And if, young and vigorous still, she had herself provoked under the dominion of passion, the rupture of the bond, that had chained her to a single love, could she be, to the eyes of the world that despised her, anything else but an intemperate woman, whose shame and opprobrium were increased by each new union?

The evils of divorce affected the whole of society.

But would that it were only the husband and the wife who were to suffer from the dishonour and injustice of their separation! But no,

divorce was an evil which was unhappily felt throughout all society. It outraged the tie of blood that bound the child to its parent; and, unable to break it, because nature had made it indissoluble, it repudiated its sacred obligations. It interrupted, the greater part of the time, the great work of education, just at the moment when authority and persuasion, strength and tenderness, should combine more closely to complete it. It tore the children from the place of their birth, transplanted them upon a foreign soil, and exposed them to the antipathies, the rebuffs, the ill-treatment of new fathers, or new mothers, who were under no obligation to them. It cast into youthful hearts, in which respect and love ought to germinate, seeds of contempt and hatred; this one taking the part of a mother unjustly abandoned, that one the part of a father betrayed. It set in antagonism against one another whole families, who espoused the cause of their blood; some exaggerating the wrongs of the guilty, others trying to find wrongs in the innocent. It provoked complaints, recriminations, and reproaches; it multiplied discords, quarrels, and actions at law. It disturbed public order; it corrupted society. It corrupted society because there it ruined the conservative and regulating principle of every social energy—the principle of authority. In giving up to the judgment of the children the conduct of their father and their mother, it brought into disesteem that

Divorce, the destructor of the education of the child.

Divorce set families at variance.

primordial power of the family of which the public power was but an imitation, a participation, an application, on a broader scale; it gradually formed generations impatient of every kind of restraint, because they would have learned to despise their authors, and would only have, under their eyes at the domestic fireside, the spectacle of licence under the false brand of liberty. It corrupted society, because it was the practical triumph of the execrable maxim, that in marriage one could take less account of the stability of the families than of the liberty of pleasure, of promises of love, than of calculations of personal interest, of duty than of passion. The conclusion of all this was self-evident. Divorce took from marriage its guarantees of delicacy, of prudence, and of love; divorce suppressed effort and progress in common life; divorce made woman forfeit the dignity assured to her by eighteen centuries of Christianity; divorce outraged the tie of blood, and violated the sacred rights of children; divorce disorganised and divided families; divorce disturbed public order, and corrupted society: divorce was, therefore, a principle of decay. Those who should think that the case was overstated have only to look into history. There they would read the same conclusion, written in sinister characters, in the life and in the death of every people who had violated the sacred law of indissolubility.

Divorce ruined the dignity of woman and outraged society.

There they would see woman oppressed, even to

debasement, by the exorbitant power which man took to himself when the right of repudiation was introduced into marriage. They would hear this lamentable cry echoing through the theatres of antiquity: "Of all living beings, we women are the most wretched race."

Divorce the ruin of the Roman Empire.

They would notice amongst the grave Romans a sixfold progress, so long as they took to heart that definition of the conjugal partnership: "A community of human and divine right:" Juris divini et humani communicatio. And they would observe that decay entered by the fissure of divorce, which they had forgotten to close, and which the edicts of the Emperors had widened. Divorce triumphed; an end had then come to the respect by which the august Roman matron was surrounded. That ornament of Roman society disappeared. The matron was replaced by licentious women, who counted their years, not by the number of consuls but by the

Description of the evils of divorce in the Roman pagan world.

number of their husbands; who changed their homes eight times in five years; and who were buried after they had had twenty-two husbands. The two sexes rivalled each other in inconstancy and libertinism. Man was the slave of caprice and passion. He put away his wife as he would have cast away a shoe that hurt his foot. A few wrinkles on the brow; teeth, whose enamel was growing tarnished; shrunken eyes; a cough that lasted too long—that was enough to make him separate himself from the companion of his life, and the mother of

his children. He did not even take the trouble to inform her himself of his repudiation; he sent her a message; "Madam, pack up your luggage and go. We cannot bear you any longer. You use your handkerchief too often. Be quick; time presses. We await another, more agreeable in her habits." The patricians exchanged their wives. Cato gave his wife over to Hortensius. "It is the custom amongst the nobles," wrote a historian. Marriage was entered into with the sole object of being dissolved afterwards; divorce had become a fruit of marriage. Several times the law was altered without producing any result except the law of adultery. "With nuptial religion, purity fled; and the same men and the same women who astonished the world by their chastity astonished it by their luxury." The debauches of these temporary unions, all entered into from motives of pleasure or of interest, rendered marriage distasteful and life a weariness. The population decreased; and Rome had no longer a sufficient number of capable soldiers to defend herself against the invasions of barbaric hordes. She borrowed her forces at her soldiers' pay. Vain precaution! Those whom she employed grew enervated by contact with her corruption, and those who came fresh from the frontiers of the empire ended by destroying it. The barbarians conquered the world which divorce had corrupted. A new world was formed. The divine law of indissolubility pene-

Christianity re-introduced the indissolubility of marriage.

trated it, fashioned it, and created the European societies that are to-day so full of life and vigour. But let care be taken. Protestantism had re-opened the terrible fissure through which decay was again coming in. Half a century had hardly passed after its advent, when Germany complained of divorce as "a prize of encouragement given to conjugal dissensions." Never, said a Protestant writer, had so many separated husbands and wives been seen as in this extravagant and decrepit century, in which foolish men publicly teach the lawfulness and necessity of the plurality of wives. England, converted to the Reformation by a lecherous king, was no better off. There divorce so multiplied domestic crimes that, at the beginning of the present century, an Anglican prelate was obliged to admit, in the House of Parliament, that, as a consequence of the divorce law, adultery had become a kind of trade, plied for the profit of discontented husbands, and of unprincipled seducers. Decay, no doubt, progressed less rapidly in our Christian societies than in pagan societies; and the peoples had certain modesties which held them back on the inclines leading to unbridled license. It was not to their characters that the merit of these modesties and these stoppages was due; it was to the sacred law of indissolubility which protected them, and which no one could abrogate so long as there are a Church and Christian families in the world. We are

The principles of the so-called Reformation favoured divorce.

not, however, secure from the calamities which corruption of manners infallibly brought in its train. "We shall better understand," said the Father of the faithful, "the magnitude of the evils produced by divorce, if we consider that once the facility of divorce is accorded, no curb, however strong, will be able to keep it within proper limits, nor even within those that have been fixed for it beforehand. The force of example is great; greater still is the force of passion. It will happen that, like a malady that is spread by contagion, or a mass of water which overflows its banks and floods all around it, this rage for divorce will increase every day, and take hold of the minds of the greatest number." That was the danger. If the children of God, tired of bearing the burdens of indissoluble unions, allowed themselves to be tempted by the too numerous examples of repudiation in which passion sought its liberties; if human laws triumphed over the divine law; if divorce became the custom of our society, then our decay was assured, and it would be more complete, more shameful, than any historical decay, because we should have fallen from a greater height. Divorce licensed the human brute, and the human brute was insatiable. After every gratification that was accorded to it, it cried out for more. After restricted liberty, it would want unlimited liberty; after the lawful union, union at will; in the union at will, polygamy; after polygamy, promiscuity.

Divorce gives licence for unrestrained indulgence.

The domestic fireside would be but a poultry yard or a kennel; and in the bestial race which would have been produced by decay inaugurated by divorce, marriage could only be defined as a paring of the sexes for the propagation of that animal species which was formerly called the human species. Thank God, they had not yet come to that, and they never would. But to make sure of this, it was necessary that true Christians and sensible men should combine together, and should resolutely make their choice between the principle of decay and the law of progress and perfection; that they should, in fact, proclaim, in their conduct, more than in their speech, "Let no man separate that which God had united."

Quod Deus conjunxit homo non separet.

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTARY APPENDIX.

Suggested Order to be Observed in the Celebration of Catholic Marriages.

I. The priest in charge of the Mission (Rector of the Mission,) or his delegate, will be responsible for the celebration of all marriages, and will receive the names of the contracting parties.

1. He will make all necessary inquiries as to the impediments of relationship, as to domicile, as to *liber status*, &c.

2. He will arrange that, if the parties live in different parishes, the banns be published in both parishes three times.

3. He will obtain a dispensation from the publication of banns, and all other dispensations, when needed.

4. The parties to be married should be exhorted to prepare to receive the Sacrament of Penance at once; and to spend the intervening time before marriage in such a way as to deserve the graces and blessings of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

5. The priest should instruct them as to the sanctity, duties, and obligations of the married state.

6. The marriage should take place, as a rule, in the Church of the district where the bride resides.

7. The priest should endeavour to induce the married parties to have their marriage blessed by the celebration of a Nuptial Mass.

8. If a legitimate cause prevent the celebration of the Nuptial Mass at the time of the marriage, the Nuptial Blessing may, nevertheless, be given after the marriage, but always during the celebration of Mass.

9. If, however, the season of the year prevents the celebration of the Nuptial Mass, and the Blessing of the Marriage, then the Nuptial Blessing may be given later, as soon as the season or time permits, but always during the celebration of Mass.

In the case of a widow, whose first marriage was blessed, neither the Nuptial Mass can be celebrated, nor the Nuptial Blessing can be given.

NOTANDA.

1. By the Nuptial Mass is understood the Votive Mass in the Missal Pro Sponso et pro sponsâ.

2. The Nuptial Blessing (*Benedictio Solemnis*) consists of the three special prayers which are enjoined to be said in the Nuptial Mass, viz.: (1) *Propitiare;* (2) *Deus qui potestate;* (3) *Deus Abraham.*

3. The Nuptial Blessing belongs to the Nuptial Mass, but it may be given apart from the Nuptial Mass, and even a considerable time after the marriage, provided it be given *during* Mass and according to the Rubrics.

4. Neither the Nuptial Mass nor the Nuptial lessing may be celebrated (tempore clauso).

5. Although the Votive Nuptial Mass may not be celebrated on feasts of the first and second class, nevertheless the Nuptial Blessing can be given during the Mass of the day. A commemoration will be made at the Mass, according to the Rubrics; and the blessing of the marriage will be read as found in the Missal.—S. R. C., 20th April, 1882.

"The priest, after he says the *Pater Noster*, before he says *Libera Nos*, genuflects, and, standing at the Epistle side of the altar, and turned towards the *Sponsi* kneeling before the altar, pronounces the Nuptial Blessing, *i.e.*, the prayers *Propitiare, et Deus qui potestate*, and, after the *Benedicamus Domino* or *Ite Missa Est*, the prayer *Deus Abraham*, &c."—Hazé, Vol. I., p. 96.

"The Nuptial Blessing, which is found in the Roman Missal, *pro sponso et sponsa*, is always to be given in the marriages of Catholics, and *always* during the celebration of Mass, in accordance with the Rubrics, but not within the proscribed seasons, to all those married persons who, through whatever cause have not obtained it, even though they ask for it after long cohabitation, provided that the woman, if a widow, did not receive the blessing at her first marriage. Moreover they are to be exhorted to receive it.

N.B.—The Nuptial Blessing may never be given at any time, except during the celebration of Mass.—In Limburgensi, 23rd Junii, 1853. Epis. Card., Lambruschini, 12th Jan., 1854. S. R. I., 31st Aug., 1881. Lehmkuhl, Vol. II., p. 488-489.

In the case of Mixed Marriages.

1. It would be advisable for the priest in charge of each Mission to receive all applications for mixed marriages: if he find it to be useless to attempt to dissuade the Catholic from the marriage, he must ascertain the *reason* assigned for the marriage.

2. The priest must arrange at once for an interview with the non-Catholic.

(*a*) To make the necessary inquiries, instruct him, and, if possible, make him disposed to receive instructions to join the Church.

(*b*) In case of the indisposition of the non-Catholic to receive instructions, then to obtain satisfactory presumptive evidence as to previous baptism, and as to present valid intentions.

(*c*) To explain and obtain the necessary promises of fulfilment of the requisite conditions.

3. The priest will then apply for a dispensation, and fill up the forms supplied for the purpose; and give all the necessary information as to the parties to be married, the reasons assigned for the mixed marriage, and, if required, an attestation that satisfactory evidence has been obtained as to the presumptive valid baptism and the present valid intention of the non-Catholic party.

4. The written promises of both parties must be obtained.

5. The banns may then be published; but no mention must be made of the difference of religion.

6. On the receipt of the dispensation the marriage can take place according to the ordinary ecclesiastical regulations laid down for such marriages, viz. :—

1. The marriage is not to take place in the Church, but outside the Church, *in loco non sacro*.

2. The priest is forbidden to perform any ecclesiastical ceremony whatever, or give any blessing whatever.

3. The priest is forbidden to be present in ecclesiastical robes or vestments.

4. The priest may be present, but only *passively*, without assisting or taking any part whatever in the marriage, except by witnessing the contract, and by registering the marriage.

The parties themselves will mutually signify their consent.

5. No Nuptial Mass can be celebrated; nor can any Nuptial Blessing be given.

II. A Mixed Marriage Without the Necessary Conditions.

Mixed marriages, about to be contracted without the necessary prescribed conditions, cannot be sanctioned in any way by the priest, and even in the case of *a special licence* no religious ceremony may be performed by the priest.

IN ENGLAND.

A Special Licence has been received from the Pope by the Bishops for the Celebration of Mixed Marriages.

This special licence can either be granted by each Bishop for particular cases, or be extended to the diocese for general observance, according as the Bishop may judge expedient, either through the fear of scandal or of other evils arising, if such licence should be refused. See Encycl., Pii IX., 1858. V. Acta S. Sedis, Vol. VI., p. 456.

BY THIS SPECIAL LICENCE

Mixed marriages may be celebrated according to the ordinary Ritual of celebrating marriages, *Ritus sacer consuetus celebrandi matrimonium*, si ita ad majora mala evitanda ordinario videtur, adhiberi potest. Lehmkuhl, Vol. II., De Matrimoniis Mixtis, p. 487, viz. :—

(1) In the Church and at the altar.

(2) According to the Diocesan Ritual.

(3) By the priest, vested in cotta and stole.

(4) But no Nuptial Mass may be celebrated.

(5) No Nuptial Blessing may be given.

This licence, however, is only granted to the Bishop by Papal decree as a special concession, and only on condition that the Bishop holds himself responsible for the truth and gravity of the circumstances alleged in justification. "Atque onerata ipsorum Antistitum conscientia super omnium circumstantiarum veritate et gravitate."—Encycl., Pii. IX., 1858. Lehmkuhl, Vol. II., p. 490.

ERRATA.

Page 223, line 27, read, "Cardinal de Lugo, de Sacramentis."

Page 224, line 20, see Ball., in Gury de Matrimonio, Vol. II.

Page 243, line 15, insert "after"; and read, Until *after* the feast, &c.

Page 263.—After line 20, add:—"Besides the *ordinary* marriage by *certificate*, there is legal marriage by *license* and by *special license*.

"Marriage by special license may be celebrated at any hour, or at any 'meet and proper place'; cost, about 30 guineas.

"Marriage by ordinary license from the Registrar may be celebrated after three days' notice; cost, between two and three guineas."

Page 405, line 27.—After 23rd of June, 1853, add "and 14th Aug., 1858, and Instr. Propag. Fid., April 19th, 1884."

Page 407.—Add after "Banns may then be published," the following words:—*By special decree, 11th May, 1864.*

See Brief, Lit. altero, Pius VIII., 25 March, 1830. Concil: Westm. Instr. Holy Office, 17 Feb., 1864.

Page 408, first line, read, "Permission" instead of license.

Page 408, tenth line, read, "permission" instead of license.

Page 408.—Add after last line:—"Concil: West. Instr. Holy Office, 17 Feb., 1864."

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et gravitate."—Encycl., Pii. IX., 1858. Lehmkuhl, Vol. II., p. 490.

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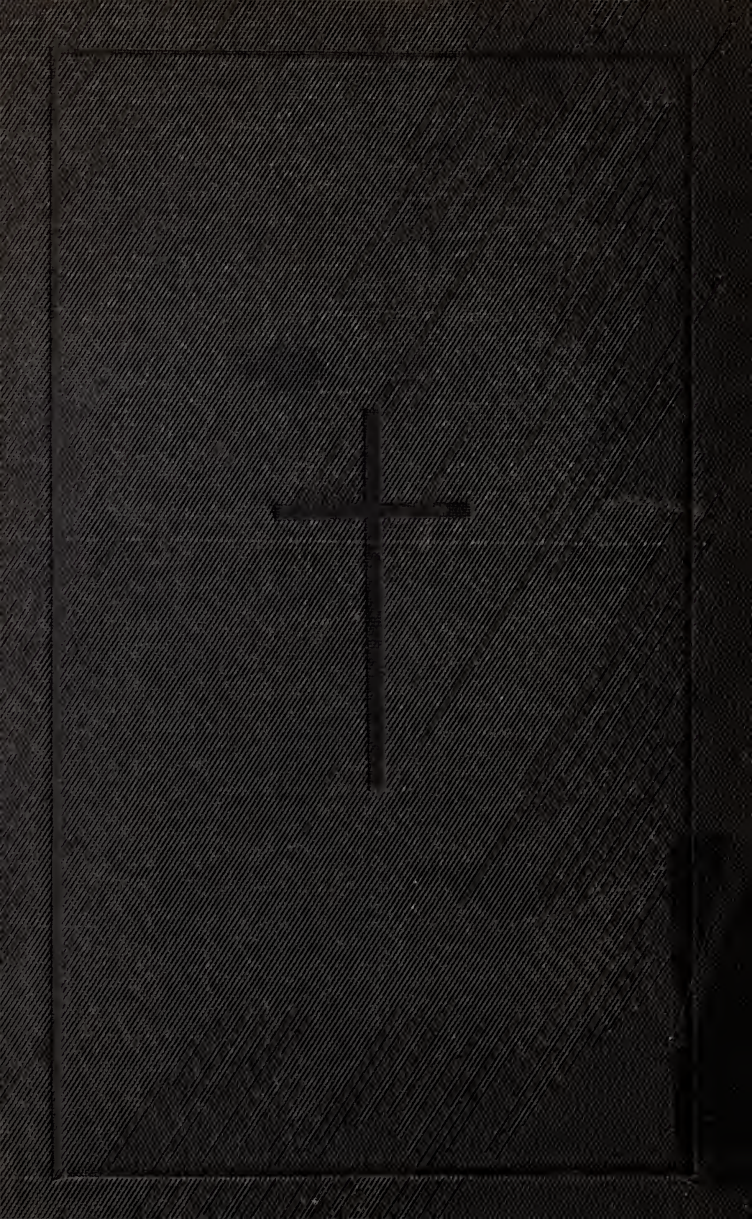
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